

Tuzla airport opens with test flight

TUZLA (AP) — A plane carrying 22 tonnes of aid and top U.N. officials flew into Tuzla on Tuesday, the first time the airport has been open for relief flights in almost two years of war. The airport's reopening — a major goal of relief officials — had been blocked for months by Serbs, whose big guns can easily reach the tarmac. The area in northern Bosnia is government-held, and about half of its 900,000 people depend on humanitarian aid. For such a historic occasion, the arrival of the first fixed-wing U.N. aircraft appeared routine. "Everything was O.K.," said Major Gunnar Karlson, at U.N. headquarters in Tuzla, shortly after the plane touched down at 9:31 a.m. (0831 GMT). The flight carried chief U.N. envoy Yakushi Akashi, French General Bertrand de Lapresle, commander of U.N. forces, and other U.N. officials. An airlift to Sarajevo has kept residents of the besieged Bosnian capital fed for much of the 23-month-old war.

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Israel, PLO close to deal

TUNIS (AP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israeli negotiators have hammered out a draft accord for an armed presence to protect Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which could revive their stalled peace talks. PLO and diplomatic sources said Tuesday.

Samir Ghosheh, a member of the PLO's ruling Executive Committee, said the agreement could be finalised during a meeting in Cairo on Thursday between PLO and Israeli negotiators.

It ratified by the Israeli government, the accord would meet a key PLO demand for returning to negotiations halted after the Feb. 25 massacre of dozens of Muslim worshippers by a Jewish settler in the West Bank town of Hebron.

Sources in Egypt said talks would be held Wednesday in Cairo between PLO representative Nabil Shaath and an Israeli negotiator, perhaps General Amnon Shahak.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres will be in Cairo then for a meeting of donor nations which have pledged to aid Palestinian autonomy, according to PLO sources.

The result of Dr. Shaath's talks with the Israelis will determine if there will be a meeting Thursday between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres, said the sources. They termed the possibility of such a meeting "highly likely."

The sources said that under the tentative agreement, Israel will accept a lightly-armed, U.N.-sponsored international presence involving 300 to 500

personnel in Hebron, 600 in Gaza and 1,000 to 1,200 in and around Jericho.

The force, which must be "clearly visible," would be under Israeli command, said the sources, who included PLO officials and Western diplomats.

Russia, Norway and other European countries have said they will contribute to the force, the sources said.

Other international observers, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the U.N. Relief and Works Agency, will also participate.

In addition, Israel and the PLO will set up joint police patrols in Hebron and other West Bank and Gaza flash-points, the sources said.

About 1,000 to 1,200 Palestinian policemen trained in Jordan will participate in the joint force, they added.

The Israelis also have agreed to move an estimated 42 Jewish families in Hebron to the settlement of Kiryat Arba on the city's outskirts, and to close a 64-student Jewish school in Hebron, European diplomats said.

News of the tentative agreement came amid intense efforts by U.S., Russian and Norwegian envoys who sought to lure Mr. Arafat back to Palestinian self-rule negotiations.

The talks are aimed at establishing limited Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank town of Jericho and Gaza under the PLO-Israeli peace accord signed Sept. 13.

The United Nations on Friday passed a resolution condemning

Ross pays brief visit; Anani describes outcome as positive

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross paid a brief visit to Amman Tuesday evening during which he held talks with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Information Minister Jawad Anani on the Middle East peace process and the resumption of Arab-Israeli negotiations in April as proposed by Washington.

While Jordan has welcomed Friday's U.N. Security Council resolution condemning the Feb. 25 massacre of dozens of Muslim worshippers by a Jewish settler in Hebron, it has said that it was awaiting consultations with the other Arab parties involved in the peace talks before announcing a decision on resuming the negotiations, which were suspended following the massacre.

In the meantime, two key issues expected to figure high



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Tuesday meets with U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross (centre) (Petra photo)

In Mr. Ross' talks here were the American abstention from voting on parts of the resolutions reaffirming Jerusalem's status as occupied territory and the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the territories Israel occupied in the 1967 war, and the continuing blockade of Aqaba (see separate stories).

It was not immediately known how Mr. Ross re-

sponded to Jordanian concerns over these two issues.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that Mr. Ross, in his talks with Prime Minister Majali, stressed the need to revive the peace process.

The talks were attended on the Jordanian side by Dr. Anani, who is also Minister of State

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Pregnant woman killed in Hebron

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank (R) — Israeli soldiers shot dead a pregnant Palestinian woman on Tuesday in the West Bank town of Hebron, witnesses said.

Anger over the mosque massacre in the town last month exploded in widespread clashes.

Hospital sources identified the dead woman as Hunduk Zahade, 32, Palestinian sources said she was shot in her home as she watched clashes outside through her window.

Witnesses in Hebron said thousands of angry Palestinians took to the streets chant-

ing "Allahu Akbar." Some stoned Israeli troops who have maintained a heavy presence in the town since the massacre on February 25.

Palestinians threw petrol bombs at a convoy of Jewish settlers passing through the town of Halhoul, next to Hebron, on their way to the settlement of Kiryat Arba on the outskirts of Hebron, a settler source said.

The bombs exploded but there were no immediate reports of wounded.

Hospitals said at least five Palestinians were wounded by

army gunfire in Hebron.

The town has been extremely tense since Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein gunned down dozens of worshippers at Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque.

The army has kept the 110,000 Arab residents under military curfew since the massacre and there have been almost daily clashes.

In the occupied West Bank town of Nablus, troops shot and wounded six Palestinians, one of them a six-month-old girl, hospital sources said. In Gaza, one Palestinian was shot and wounded in clashes.

Deputies urge government to link peace talks with Aqaba siege

By Suhair Obeidat and P.V. Vivekanand

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Tuesday called on the government not to resume its peace negotiations with Israel until the U.S.-led blockade on the Red Sea port of Aqaba is actually lifted and the lifting is announced at the U.N. Security Council.

The call by the legislature came shortly before U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross arrived in Amman as part of Washington's preparations to resume the next round of Arab-Israeli peace talks.

It also came against the backdrop of reports that a German vessel carrying general cargo bound for Jordan was blocked at the Tiran Straits at the mouth of Aqaba. The ship was prevented from proceeding to Aqaba when it arrived at the straits on Friday, shipping agents said.

Officials said the interceptions of Aqaba-bound ships as part of the enforcement of the 43-month-old international sanctions against Iraq were one of the key topics for discussions with Mr. Ross.

The lawmakers' statement said: "The Jordanian Parlia-

ment condemns the continued American aggression against the Arab Nation in implementation of the American aims to control Arab wealth and serve Israel's interests in the region."

"It also condemns the unjust American embargo which continues to deprive the brotherly Iraqi people of food and medicine and basic services and the unjust blockade of the port of Aqaba aimed at pressuring Jordan through all means and methods to deprive its freedom of decision in all matters related to the Arab Nation," said the statement.

We request the government not to go back to the negotiations table until the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba is actually lifted and the lifting is announced at the U.N. Security Council," it said.

During a session of Parliament earlier in the day, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali told the lawmakers that the government was pursuing all efforts to lift the blockade of Aqaba.

Dr. Majali said he had met with U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan Jr. Tuesday morning to lodge a protest against the continuing blockade at Aqaba.

Dr. Majali referred to the repeated presentations Jordan made to the U.S. and the U.N. Security Council, which imposed the sanctions against Iraq following that country's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

He was replying to deputies, some of whom demanded that Jordan, whose economy is suffering as a result of the blockade at Aqaba, refuse to abide by the sanctions against Iraq.

While that was not possible in view of Jordan's long standing commitment to international resolutions and decisions of the U.N. Security Council, the Kingdom is following up on proposals which would do away with the negative impact on Jordan of the interceptions of Aqaba-bound shipping, officials said.

"The process is continuing," said a senior official, referring to a proposal that the inspection of goods coming to Jordan be moved to Aqaba port rather than the Tiran Straits.

The proposal, tabled during a January visit to the U.S. of His Majesty King Hussein, was reportedly received positively

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House decries 'change' in U.S. stand on Jerusalem

By P.V. Vivekanand Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament on Tuesday condemned the U.S. abstention from voting on references to the status of Jerusalem and other Israeli-occupied territories in Friday's U.N. Security Council resolution condemning the Feb. 25 massacre at a mosque in the West Bank town of Hebron.

In a statement issued on the last day of its first regular session, the House said the U.S. abstention during voting on Resolution 904 signalled a "clear change in the American stand," which had hitherto viewed Jerusalem as well as other Palestinian territories as occupied.

"The Lower House of Parliament condemns the American position and calls on the parliaments of Arab and Islamic countries as well as those of countries which support just causes to protest against the American stand," the statement said.

The Lower House said it "deeply regretted the weak coordination among the Arab delegations at the world body" leading to the adoption of the resolution which did not satisfy

the Arab position.

It was an indirect swipe at the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), which held extensive consultations with the U.S. on the wording of Resolution 904 since it was first drafted shortly after the Feb. 25 massacre.

The delay was caused by American insistence on deleting parts of the draft and differences with the PLO on the phrasing and wording of the document.

His Majesty King Hussein said in a recent interview that Jordan was not a party to the consultations over the draft and noted that he had launched a personal effort to come up with a joint Arab stand vis-a-vis the issue a few hours before the Security Council adopted the resolution.

The King said the door would not have been open for the U.S. to abstain on parts of the resolution had the document omitted any specific reference to Jerusalem and referred to the territories that Israel occupied in the 1967 war in a general context.

The American abstention has sounded alarm bells in

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King continues talks in Oman, begins visit to Qatar today

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein today starts a visit to Qatar where he will hold talks with Sheikh Khalifah Bin Hamad Al Thani, the emir of Qatar, on the situation in the region, means of mending Arab rifts and the latest developments in the Middle East peace process.

On Tuesday, the King continued his talks in Oman with Sultan Qaboos Bin Saied on bilateral relations and inter-Arab affairs.

King Hussein, who arrived in Oman Monday, was expected to have also discussed with Sultan Qaboos the situation in Yemen and duties assigned to a joint Jordanian-Omani military commission supervising the implementation of military aspects of the Yemeni reform and reconciliation agreement signed in Amman Feb. 20.

The military committee said Tuesday that Yemeni parties agreed to pull out their troops from a provincial capital, Reu-

ter reported. The committee, formed to disengage rival Yemeni army units, told residents of Ataq, capital of the southern oil-producing region of Shabwa, that an agreement had been reached to withdraw troops from and around the city.

"An agreement has been reached by all parties concerned to withdraw all signs of military presence from Ataq and return all groups around the city to their (respective) bases," the committee said in a statement.

Jordanian, Omani and Yemeni officers along with the American and French military attaches in Yemen formed the committee after the country's two main political rivals signed the reconciliation agreement in Amman on Feb. 20.

The military committee called on Ataq residents to resume normal life, urging shops to reopen, employees to return to work and students to

go back to their schools.

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan who is accompanying King Hussein, said the visit to Oman constitutes a qualitative leap in Arab-Arab relations.

In a telephone interview with Jordan Television, Mr. Hassan said Jordanian-Omani relations "get stronger by time and are an example to be followed in Arab relations."

The King's visit to Qatar aims to give a new dimension to "the good and distinguished bilateral relations which are continuously developing," said Mr. Hassan.

He said relations between King Hussein and the emir of Qatar are "a basic foundation for Jordanian-Qatari relations."

The visit, he said, "comes within the framework of continued consultations and coordination between the two leaders and officials of the two countries."

Parliament recesses; fate of key sales tax law uncertain

By Suhair Obeidat and P.V. Vivekanand

AMMAN — Jordan's 12th Parliament ended its first regular session on Tuesday without approving a controversial draft law introducing sales tax, throwing doubts over the fate of a move that is crucial to the Kingdom's efforts to address its foreign debt burden and economic recovery programme.

As the House held its last session and heard its Financial Committee's recommendation that the draft law be endorsed with some amendments, the powerful Islamic Action Front (IAF) boycotted the session in protest against the draft legislation.

Leftist political activists and union leaders held a sit-in outside the Parliament building,

also protesting the introduction of the levy.

The House did not adopt any action on the Financial Committee's recommendation except hearing it being read out by its rapporteur, Sa'ad Hayel Srour.

The government is expected to recommend to His Majesty King Hussein that an extraordinary Parliament session be convened to debate and approve pending key legislation, including the draft sales tax law and another draft law related to insurance companies.

In a letter of intent signed early this year, the government undertook to introduce the sales tax as of March, but disputes over the levy stalled the final draft of the legislation until late February, making it impossible for the lawmakers

to debate and endorse it.

The sales tax is part of the economic recovery programme prescribed for Jordan by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which helped the Kingdom reschedule part of its foreign debts, which stood at \$8.3 billion in 1989.

The Kingdom brought down the debt to \$6.6 billion by the end of 1993 through partial settlements and write-offs as well as rescheduling at favourable terms. Further rescheduling requires an obligatory IMF certification, which hinges on introduction of the sales tax.

The IAF, a vehement opponent of the entire IMF programme, said in a statement that its boycott of Tuesday's session was directly related to the sales tax.

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Masri gives C plus to deputies, sees great room for reform

By Suhair Obeidat Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Lower House Speaker Taher Al Masri on Tuesday praised the performance of the 12th Parliament but said great room remained for a comprehensive review and modernisation of the legislature's mechanism and internal procedures.

Speaking at a press conference at the end of the House's first ordinary session, Masri said: "This parliament has played its role fully... but its mechanism needs a comprehensive review."

"There were some mistakes and drawbacks which occurred mainly in the absence of a true institutionalisation and a genuine weight of political parties," he added.

He added that the democratic course was a continued pro-

cess and that building an institutionalised parliament requires great effort and time.

Mr. Masri said Parliament's internal procedures "were devised 40 years ago at a different time and different political situations. It is time we search for a renewed mechanism."

Some of the aspects to be considered, according to Mr. Masri, are the duration of the session, quorum, the need for the cabinet to attend the sessions and feasibility of various committees meeting when the House is in recess.

"The fact that the committees can only meet when Parliament is in session puts them under great pressure and results in bottlenecks when it comes to handling the load of issues to be addressed," he said.

"Next month I am inviting a group of colleagues, current

and former parliamentarians and experts to a symposium to formulate ideas to be later translated into a new system of internal procedures," he said.

According to Mr. Masri, the 11th Parliament had called for some constitutional changes "but this issue must be handled with great caution and depth."

He said there was consensus on the need to amend some articles in the Constitution, "especially those added after the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the ones related to the duration of the session."

On the deputies' performance during the session that began in November, Mr. Masri conceded the need to appoint legal and other consultants to aid parliamentarians in their debates of various laws and

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Majali government gearing up for changes in makeup and perception

By Nermeen Murad Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, three months after securing a fragile vote of confidence from the Lower House of Parliament, is apparently ready for a fundamental change in its makeup and image.

Several factors have contributed to what is termed as "growing uneasiness" in political circles and among cabinet members themselves. Most important of which is that the Majali cabinet has so far downplayed its role to that of a largely caretaker government with a one-item agenda of supporting the Middle East peace talks.

Yet, heavy parliamentary

criticism, a scandal laid open by a cabinet member, political bickering over its choice of appointees for senior public posts and last but not least the lack of progress in Arab-Israeli negotiations have, according to officials and critics, made it imperative for Dr. Majali to reassess the situation and introduce change.

Critics of the government have been consistent in highlighting what they consider as the lack of "strategic thinking" in the government's handling of important issues. They charge that the government continues to react to events rather than preempt them with well thought-out policies and strategies.

These critics cite the cabinet's inability to mobilise

popular support behind the peace process and explain its implications on Jordan as one of the more damaging of its failings. They maintain that while the government has tied its role almost completely to progress in the Arab-Israeli negotiations, it has failed to articulate that role and gain the backing of the people.

The government's lack of political colour, these critics add, does not excuse its apparent lack of "political strategy," especially in the way its movements and decisions on the local front are portrayed in the official media and press in general.

Perhaps this last point is where the government agrees with the critics most. A senior cabinet official sum-

med it up by saying that the "image of the government among the public, as it was created by the government itself, is unfair."

The official admits that the government has yet to draw up a plan of action for its internal policies and a media strategy that would serve to present it to the public in the proper context. "There is a growing feeling among cabinet members lately that there is a need to draw up a strategy."

Such a strategy, the official admits, can only come with "reassessing the situation and arming ourselves with new makeup for the cabinet."

He said, however, that the shift in the government perception and makeup from what people have come to

know as a "caretaker government" to a full-fledged executive authority is slowly coming together and that a cabinet reshuffle will only come when the perception of the role of the government has been fully worked out.

In its response to critics, the Majali government is careful to distance itself from the image it carried into the confidence session in December.

With a limited reshuffle to back him, Dr. Majali sought the confidence of the House, having dissolved the 11th parliament, carried out a controversial amendment to the election law and bogged down by charges that his cabinet was affiliated to a two-year-old political party established by his brother

Abdul Hadi Majali.

It took much lobbying, political wrangling and loud promises of administrative reform and commitment to democracy to a simple majority of 41 votes from the 80-member Lower House of Parliament.

Gravelling as the three-day confidence session was, that was not the end of it. Criticism continued to be heaped on the government from the predominantly centrist Lower House. Deputies elected on a one-person, one-vote formula felt that each and every one of them had to be taken seriously by the government because he or she had won on his or her own personal merit and not by the weight of any political party as with the previous bloc-voting

system.

The lack of political cohesion among House members added to the disorganisation of government work, critics admit. "There is no system according to which this Parliament operated," a former senior official told the Jordan Times in an interview. "They asked for a political statement on the peace process. Then there was the budget, then the supply policy, the agriculture policy, the Health Ministry statement etc.," he said. "There was no system."

The government was forced to react to these demands as they came. In the past three months the government had had to seek the



Abdul Salam Majali

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Princess Basma calls on Arab women to re-examine their roles in development

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday urged Arab women to re-examine their roles in socio-economic development and form a working mechanism that keeps in step with international, regional and local changes.

"The world is currently witnessing a stage in which much stress is being placed on peace, development and human rights issues and women in Jordan and the Arab World are called on to promote their role and rise to the challenge," said the Princess.

In an address at the opening session of a meeting by the Permanent Bureau of the General Federation of Arab Women (GFAW) in Amman, Princess Basma underlined the importance of Arab women's gatherings at the regional and Arab levels to draft a federation plan to be applied now, until the year 2000.

With reference to women's activities in Jordan, the Princess said women here have succeeded in forming a national strategy envisaged as an umbrella for women's activities



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Tuesday Permanent Bureau of the General Federation of Arab Women held in Amman (Petra photo)

in political, social and economic affairs. She said the strategy, which opens the door for women from various walks of life to join in the general women's efforts, was formulated to address women's various needs.

Princess Basma said several sub-committees that have been

formed to help implement the strategy are involved in legislative, economic, educational and social matters, adding that there is also a committee serving as a liaison with Jordanian women.

Participants to the three-day meeting, who come from Jordan and 12 other countries,

will review several reports summing up the general GFAW's activities and the completion of the federation's plan until the year 2000.

Several cabinet members and representatives of Arab diplomatic missions in Amman were among Tuesday's attendees.

Deputy urges government to apply public safety measures swiftly

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Deputy Samir Habashneh (Karak) urged the government to take serious steps towards applying safety measures in Jordan's factories, major firms and various organisations to ensure public safety.

The lawmaker said he hoped that the recommendations made by Minister of Interior, Salameh Hamad at a conference held to address public safety concerns would be "on the way of application."

In a question to the minis-

ter, Deputy Habashneh inquired about safety measures in establishments, "especially following the Safeway incident."

The fire that broke out in the Safeway supermarket/department store and the damages incurred proved that safety measures in the country were "neglected" and that tens of citizens faced death due to this "negligence."

Mr. Hamad's answer focused on results of the public safety conference held last month and attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ma'an

Abu Nowar, several Cabinet members, the Amman governor, Public Security Department (PSD) officials and senior army officers.

He said a special committee has been formed to draft recommendations concerning safety measures and public awareness of the issue's importance, and that the draft legislation would be passed to the Lower House of Parliament after it is written.

The minister added that despite strict regulations concerning public safety in organisations, some establishments "undergo reconstruction,

ignoring such regulations. He said the country lacks specialists in that area.

The deputy expressed disappointment that citizens were not informed of the causes of the Safeway fire, although it is "our right as citizens and parliamentarians to know who or what was behind it," he stressed.

The draft law on public safety regulations is expected to be submitted to the Lower House to be discussed in its extraordinary session, which parliamentary sources said is expected to convene next month.

Japan's Kubo quartet to take bow to strings at RCC

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation and the Embassy of Japan Tuesday, April 5 will present "a unique musical experience," performed by the Kubo Classical Quartet for Strings, according to an embassy statement.

The quartet is named after Yoko Kubo (1st violin), director of the Kurashiki Music Festival and professor at the Tokyo College of Music. A renowned violinist, Ms. Kubo started her formal study on the violin at the age of eight in Tokyo with Shinkichi Murayama, and moved on to study under Jeanne Ishard and Hideo Saito, professors at the Toho Gakuen College of Music.

During her career, she studied under famous teachers like René Benetti and Joseph Calvet in Paris (1963), and Joseph Szegedi in Switzerland (1967).

She worked as a soloist with such celebrated conductors as Kyrrill Kondrashin, Jan van Otterloo and Lorin Maazel.

Ms. Kubo made her debut in 1962, gaining third prize in the Tchaikovsky International Violin Competition. Performing in Europe and the United States, she won prizes at the Paganini International Music Competition, the Long-Thibaud International Violin Competition and Kyz International Competition.

Her work as a recitalist and soloist was highly acclaimed in Japan, where she also formed the Kiri Quintet with her husband, pianist Takashi Hirouaka.

Midori Kugota (second violin) was a student of the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music, studied at the Juilliard School in New York on scholarships from the Rockefeller Foundation, graduated from Indiana University and in 1976 began performing in Japan. Ms. Kugota performed as a soloist with the Nippon Tele-mann Ensemble before forming the Midori Kugota String Quartet in 1979. As a teacher at Kyoto City University of Arts, she is instructing a new generation of musicians to continue the "great tradition" of her famous teachers including the late Saburo Sumi, the late Yuji Togi, Toyoko Hattori, the late I. Galamian and J. Gingold.

Junji Suganuma (viola) studied the violin with Yozo Iwasaki and viola with Takeo Inoue. After completing his studies at the Tokyo National University of Arts and Music in 1963, he became a member of the Mari Iwamoto String Quartet and was later appointed to the first desk of the viola section of the NHK Symphony Orchestra in 1976. He has several distinguished prizes to his credit and is currently a professor at the Tokyo National University of Arts and Music.

Ko Iwasaki (cello) gradu-



Yoko Kubo on first violin

ated with honours from the Toho Conservatoire in 1963, where he studied cello under Hideo Saito. He soon appeared as a soloist with all of Japan's leading orchestras, including the Tokyo Symphony. In 1964, he went to the United States on a Fullbright Scholarship and studied at the Juilliard School.

During 1966 he made his New York debut in the Young Artist Concert Series. That same year, Mr. Iwasaki studied with Pablo Casals in Puerto Rico.

In 1972, he made his European debut with the London Symphony Orchestra with André Previn conducting.

During his career, Mr. Iwasaki has won many competitive honours, including: second prize in the Casado International Cello Competition; second prize in the International Competition (Munich, Germany) for Cello and Piano Duos; and a bronze medal in the 1970 International Tchaikovsky Competition.

Before coming to Jordan, the quartet will play in Strasbourg.

Their programme in Amman will include works by Mozart, Saburo Takada, Wolf, and Schubert. The performance will be at the Royal Cultural Centre.

SSC to sell off most resthouses

AMMAN (Petra) — The Social Security Corporation (SSC) has decided to sell all but two of the tourist resthouses it has been operating because of losses which amounted to JD 2.4 million by the end of 1993, SSC Director General Mohammad Hourani announced Tuesday.

Mr. Hourani attributed the losses at the resthouses to an inflexible government-style bureaucratic system, incapable of decision-making.

He said the resthouse at Mudawarah near the Saudi Arabian border has already been sold and arrangements are underway to sell the Dibbin, Zay, Azraq, Karak, Madaba, Ma'an, Ishtafina, Rum, Ramtha, Ghor Hadithah, Grandal, Ras Al

Naqab, H-4, and Al Omari resthouses. The SSC will maintain control of the Petra and Jerash establishments.

The SSC owns three hotels which last year netted a JD 2.5 million profit and the corporation intends to maintain control of these businesses, Mr. Hourani said.

He added that on the whole, the SSC last year earned profits on its investments in various businesses at the rate of 7.4 per cent of the total invested capital, up from 7.1 per cent in 1992.

Referring to the total capital accumulated from premiums since the SSC started operations in January 1980, Mr. Hourani said it amounted to JD571 million by the end of 1993, plus JD 191 million in

profits on investments.

He said the corporation has paid out JD 134 million since 1980 in pensions, compensation, occupational injury insurance, medicines and other expenses in addition to JD 47 million for administrative costs.

Highlighting the areas of SSC investments, Mr. Hourani said that the largest sum, JD 257.7 million (45.6 per cent) is deposited in banks, and the rest of the capital has been earning profits from its investments in agricultural, industrial and other sectors.

According to Mr. Hourani, the corporation has a total of JD 650,000 invested in four companies which are operating at a loss with no hope of recovery, adding that an addi-

tional JD 2.3 million is invested in four companies currently facing difficulties which could be handled in cooperation with other shareholders.

Saying that the present bureaucratic system places many obstacles in the path of business, Mr. Hourani explained that for every investment or purchase it makes, the SSC must secure the consent of a committee which takes great deal of time in assessing the benefits of new enterprises and thus delays or results in lost opportunities to make investments.

Mr. Hourani urged that the SSC operations be free of government-style bureaucratic control in order to boost its services and ensure more profits.

Course focuses on aerosols conversion

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Activity Centre and its regional office for West Asia Tuesday opened a three-day event in cooperation with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the environment designed as a regional training course on aerosols conversion and the use of alternative industrial substances to those considered harmful to the ozone layer.

Fouad Kanbour, senior environmental affairs officer at UNEP, said: "We are all here today, united by a common cause, to deal with the threat of ozone depletion."

Dr. Kanbour, addressing about 60 delegates and experts from Arab and foreign countries, said the depletion of the ozone layer is associated with an increase in the cases of skin cancer and eye cataracts, and a deterioration in crop productivity and the distribution in the marine chain.

"It is known that ozone depletion will continue and reach its highest level around the year 2000," he said.

Dr. Kanbour warned of the dangers that are facing human lives. "Anything we may do right now is already 10 years late. This might give you an idea of the time pressure we all have upon us," he added.

According to Dr. Kanbour, the main objective of the meeting is to provide information on the latest technologies and related safety issues in the aerosols sector in order to promote the formulation of investment projects to phase out ozone-depleting substances (ODSs) in the industrial sector.

Dr. Kanbour further explained that the information provided in the three-day

PARTICIPANT TO COURSE ON AEROSOLS CONVERSION AMMAN, JORDAN



Speakers Monday present at the first day of version and alternatives to ozone-depleting a regional training course on aerosol substances in industry (Petra photo)

course will prove that there are no good technical or economical reasons to keep producing aerosols with ODSs.

"We expect that most of the countries that are still producing aerosols with ODSs will be convinced to change over and to initiate action plans to assist the aerosol industry to phase out ODSs in a more expeditious and cost-effective manner," said Dr. Kanbour.

Ghazi Odat, assistant director of the Department of Environment's chief division of air pollution at the ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, said the reason Jordan hosted this first regional training course was because Jordan became a signatory to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol regarding the preservation of the ozone layer.

Mr. Odat, an engineer, said "Jordan uses 650 tonnes of materials that affect the ozone layer but the Jordanian

Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC) is producing substitutes to ODSs and supplying them to various Jordanian firms from a \$1.8 million fund allocated for Jordan by the Montreal Protocol Fund."

He said industries in the Kingdom have been using materials, especially in refrigeration and air conditioning processes, that cause further depletion of the ozone layer and contribute to global warming.

Mr. Odat said there was erosion to the ozone layer over the north and south poles which is causing harm to the environments of nearby countries.

"Ultraviolet rays are dangerous if they pass through the 20-kilometre ozone layer and could harm humans and nature," he added.

Presentations by other participants included Mexico and Egypt's experiences in converting from harmful chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)

to hydrocarbons, alternatives and aerosol valve and can technology, and the transport of hydrocarbon propellants.

Today's activities will include presentations by delegates on a developing country's (India's) perspective, conversion formulation technology, and hydrocarbon propellant fillings. In the afternoon session, topics to be discussed include aerosol machinery considerations, storage of hydrocarbon propellants, open-air filling of hydrocarbon propellants, not in-kind substitutes, hydrocarbon propellant purification, assistance available from multilateral funds, and governmental support.

On Thursday, delegates will pay a visit to the Household and Toiletries Manufacturing Company in Irbid, and in the evening they will conclude their meeting with a round table discussion of recommendations, questions and solutions.

Cabinet approves Slovenia consul

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday approved the appointment of Haidar Issa Murad as honorary consul of Slovenia to Jordan.

Labour minister issues ban

AMMAN (Petra) — Labour Minister Khaled Ghazawi Tuesday banned non-Jordanians from selling lottery tickets in the Kingdom and issued instructions to labour department directors to follow up on the implementation of that decision.

Kaabneh leaves for Spain

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Abdul Hafez Mirai Al Kaabneh Tuesday left for Madrid on a several-day official visit to Spain.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- Jordanian-Iraqi contemporary exhibition by over 80 artists at Ala Art Gallery in Wadi Sagra 9:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. (Tel. 644451).
- Exhibition of heritage (Jordanian fashions, wooden sculptures, fresh and dried flowers, and cards) at the University of Jordan.
- Exhibition by Syrian artists Abdul Manan Shamma, Khalid Almaz, and Mamdouh Kashlan at Ab'ad Art Gallery.
- Exhibition of sculptures and drawings by Jordanian sculptor Samer Tabbaa. Also showing "permanent" exhibition of 54 Arab contemporary artists at Darat Al Fuuun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (Tel. 643251/2).
- Exhibition entitled "Writers Do Draw" by Jamsil Naji, Ibrahim Nasrallah, and Farouq Wadi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Plastic art exhibition by Syrian artists Abdul Qader Azzouz and Aoun Al Droubi at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291).
- Drama entitled "A Very Symbolic Play" at the main theatre at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT Jordanian-Syrian Land Transport Co.

INVITES

Contractors to participate in tender No. 3/94 for supply of spare parts for its Mercedes trucks type (L&LS 2624) as per parts numbers and quantities attached with terms of tender.

Contractors wishing to bid for tender can obtain copies of tender documents from the company Al Qastal — Queen Alia Intl. Airport, Amman for a non-refundable fee of JD 120,000 (one hundred and twenty Jordanian dinars) per copy bearing official documents proving their registration in records of trading agents or brokers. Offers should be submitted not later than 2:30 p.m. (Jordan local time) on Monday the 25th of April/1994.

Chairman General Manager

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Teaching German Language.
From 16th April - 17 May 1994, for 28 hours, six hours, per week, Sat., Mon., and Wed., 4:00 - 6:00 pm, Fees JD 40

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
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Why kill the children?

WHEN AN Israeli driver slammed his truck into two vans carrying Palestinian workers back from their work in Israel on Dec. 7, 1987, Palestinian anger erupted and the intifada ensued. The incident was only the trigger. Palestinian frustration that had built up over a 20-year occupation had no end in sight.

In 1987, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) had become ineffective in its war against Israel after being exiled five years earlier to Tunis. The Arabs, especially in the east Mediterranean were occupied with the Iran-Iraq war. Moreover, the Arabs and international communities had relegated the Palestine question to second and third degrees in their agendas. For the Palestinians under occupation the violent uprising was the last resort, and it proved rewarding though deadly. It turned deadly because it was a head-on confrontation with a brutal occupation. The Israelis reacted to the intifada, with killings, curfews, mass arrests, demolition of homes and expulsions. The images of Israeli troops chasing stone-throwing children and shooting live-bullets and tear-gas canisters at them is a daily menu on TV newscasts. Around 2,000 Palestinians, mostly children, have been killed in the last six years and thousands were maimed or disabled. More than 10,000 languish in Israeli jails; and scores of Palestinian activists were deported. The intifada in itself had contributed a great deal to highlighting the cause of the Palestinian people and asserting the role of the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, a status Israel finally acknowledged in Oslo.

But despite Israel's realisation that it should disengage itself from the Palestinian people and quit the occupied territories, the military establishment still insists at brutalising the Palestinians and breaking their morale; something it seems unable to do — which probably explains its intransigent attitude. The least in terms of confidence-building measures the Israelis could have done since the signing of the Oslo deal in September would have been an easing of the army presence in the populated regions of the West Bank and Gaza. After all Palestinian stone-throwing children only react to the Israeli soldiers. We fail to see what armed Israeli soldiers fear when they face stone-throwing children. We also fail to understand what continues to motivate them to continue killing on a daily basis. What motivates anyone to kill blind people and 8-month-old children?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PRESIDENT CLINTON is trying to find a way out of the Whitewater scandal by threatening war against North Korea, said Mohammad Kharroub a columnist in Al Ra'i daily. The more the pressure in the Whitewater affair the more the president is inclined to find a pretext to get his country involved in Korean affairs, said the writer. But the writer said that the international situation is different now from the scene that prevailed before President Bush launched his war on Iraq. North Korea is showing a firm and obstinate stand against the U.S. desires, the Chinese are at odds with Washington over the latter's accusations that Beijing does not respect human rights, the Russians are trying to make a comeback as a major world nation and the Japanese are at odds with the U.S. over trade, said the writer. He added that the South Koreans might not be at ease at the idea of going to war with the North and afraid of the future developments. All these unfavourable situations, he said, make it rather impossible for Washington to secure a U.N. Security Council resolution to launch hostile activities or even sanctions on North Korea.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dastour said that the world community is expected to seriously contemplating ending the embargo on Iraq in six months' time in view of the latest world developments and the new positions of various governments. Mohammad Kawash said the French are leading the way because they have realised that their national interests have been endangered with the continuation of the sanctions, while Russia has already announced it would have to take a unilateral decision in lifting the sanctions in six months and China is opposed to the United States' views in this regard and is keen on protecting its own interests. Also many countries are in need of Iraqi oil and could be taking steps to terminate the embargo, continued the writer. He said that the Arab and Islamic countries should end their subjugation to Washington and start making preparations for ending the sanctions. The writer voiced hope that the Arab League would take a decision in this regard which would help reestablish solidarity among Arab states.

Saudi Arabia bites the financial bullet

By Andrew Cunningham

Saudi Arabia's bold announcement at the beginning of this year that it was to cut government expenditure by 19 per cent sent a clear signal that it intends to deal head on with the current trauma of low oil prices, while starting to tackle the more long-term challenges of chronic current account shortfalls and budget deficits. The budget announcement has been accompanied by a number of measures aimed at reducing government outlays. Some projects, such as refinery upgrades, are being postponed, defence payments to U.S. arms suppliers are in the process of being rescheduled and capital expenditure by government ministries is being curtailed. It is clear that the kingdom is looking beyond the immediate loss of oil revenues and mapping out a realistic capital spending plan for the end of the decade.

Saudi Arabia's decision to bite the bullet has, for the moment, ended the speculation over the viability of its economic policies which reached a crescendo in the final weeks of 1993. A leaked International Monetary Fund (IMF) report on the Saudi economy, which urged substantial and immediate fiscal tightening, followed by a series of newspaper articles drawing lurid pictures of the depletion of the kingdom's foreign reserves, led to sustained pressure on the Saudi riyal. When oil prices began their downward slide in mid-October, it was clear that the Saudi authorities would not be able to postpone drastic measures — and difficult choices.

The budget, announced on Jan. 1, projects spending and revenues balanced at 160 billion riyals (\$43.7 billion). This represents a reduction in spending of 19 per cent compared to 1992 and in revenue of 5 per cent (This will start looking optimistic if oil prices remain at the present low levels for much longer). On the spending side, the only clear figure given in the budget was that for municipalities and water authorities, for which the allocation was cut by a quarter. Despite the lack of numbers, the budget did give a clear

indication of overall economic thinking. The importance which the government attaches to the private sector was underlined by the fact that the budget document included a specific allocation for development institutions which extend low interest loans for private sector ventures. The statement from the finance ministry which accompanied the budget document drew attention to the fact that private sector growth during 1993 had been five per cent compared to overall growth of one per cent. Further encouragement for the private sector came from the king's forthright rejection of devaluation in his speech to the cabinet. The prospect of devaluation in the weeks preceding the budget had threatened to reduce the flow of private

government spending is the key source of private sector business. Oil prices started falling at the end of October 1993 and are now at their lowest level since 1988. There is little prospect that action by OPEC states, either alone or in conjunction with other producers, will send the price much higher before the summer, when prices traditionally fall. In the medium term, further downward pressure of prices could come from a resumption of Iraqi exports in late 1994, while over the long term OPEC's excess production capacity will continue to put a dampener on higher prices as those countries who have invested their scarce resources to increase oil export potential seek to recoup their investment with higher OPEC

Sandis may be hurt by a fall in oil prices, other exporters will be hurt more, which is why Saudi Arabia is not currently rushing to involve itself in any hastily thought out production cuts which might produce only ephemeral results. It prefers instead to wait until the next full OPEC ministerial meeting in Geneva on March 25. It will not cut its production from 8 million barrels per day — the level which it has doggedly defended since the Gulf war — unless it is absolutely sure that it will benefit in terms of price.

In essence the kingdom wants any attempt to boost prices to result in a sustained increase, not a temporary rally, and it does not want any such agreement to initiate an erosion of its market share. Both objectives make absolute sense in terms of long-term revenue maximisation and, unlike many other oil exporters, the kingdom still has the financial strength to hold out for what will benefit it in the long run.

Borrowed billions

Saudi Arabia is also able to supplement its revenues through borrowing. During the last three years it has raised billions of dollars from local, regional and international banks. Bankers who lend in the Gulf agree that the kingdom still has plenty of scope for raising more money, provided that it structures and prices its loans wisely. International banks might find a \$2 billion balance of payments loan a bit hard to swallow, for example, but a series of smaller loans, directly funding new industry or the expansion of existing petrochemical plants, would not present a problem. Despite all the borrowing since the Gulf war, Saudi Arabia's debt ratios remain well within prudential norms and the country's financial authorities enjoy excellent relationships with the world's leading banks.

An indication of future debt strategy will come during the next few months as the financial authorities decide how to pay for the recent \$6 billion civil aircraft order from Boeing and McDonnell Douglas (to replace the fleet of Saudi, the national airline) and how to raise a further \$6 billion needed to defer payments due

quotas. In the face of this revenue scenario, Saudi Arabia will have to maintain domestic living standards which are based on subsidised utilities and free welfare provision. Nor does the kingdom wish to abandon hard-won national triumphs, such as self sufficiency in grain, despite the need to support them with billions of riyals in subsidies. Nor does it wish to reduce its overseas development aid programme. It must also find money to service foreign debt and defuse obligations.

Saudi Arabia has many tools at its disposal to overcome these difficulties, the greatest being its ability to withstand temporary fluctuations in oil revenues. For despite recent depletion in foreign reserves the government still has access to large amounts of cash, both from its own resources and from local banks, at short notice. Furthermore, it remains one of the world's wealthiest nations and the fact is that, however much of the

"Oil accounts for 75 per cent of total government revenue and government spending is the key source of private sector business. Oil prices are now at their lowest level since 1988. There is little prospect that action by OPEC states will send the price much higher before the summer, when prices traditionally fall."

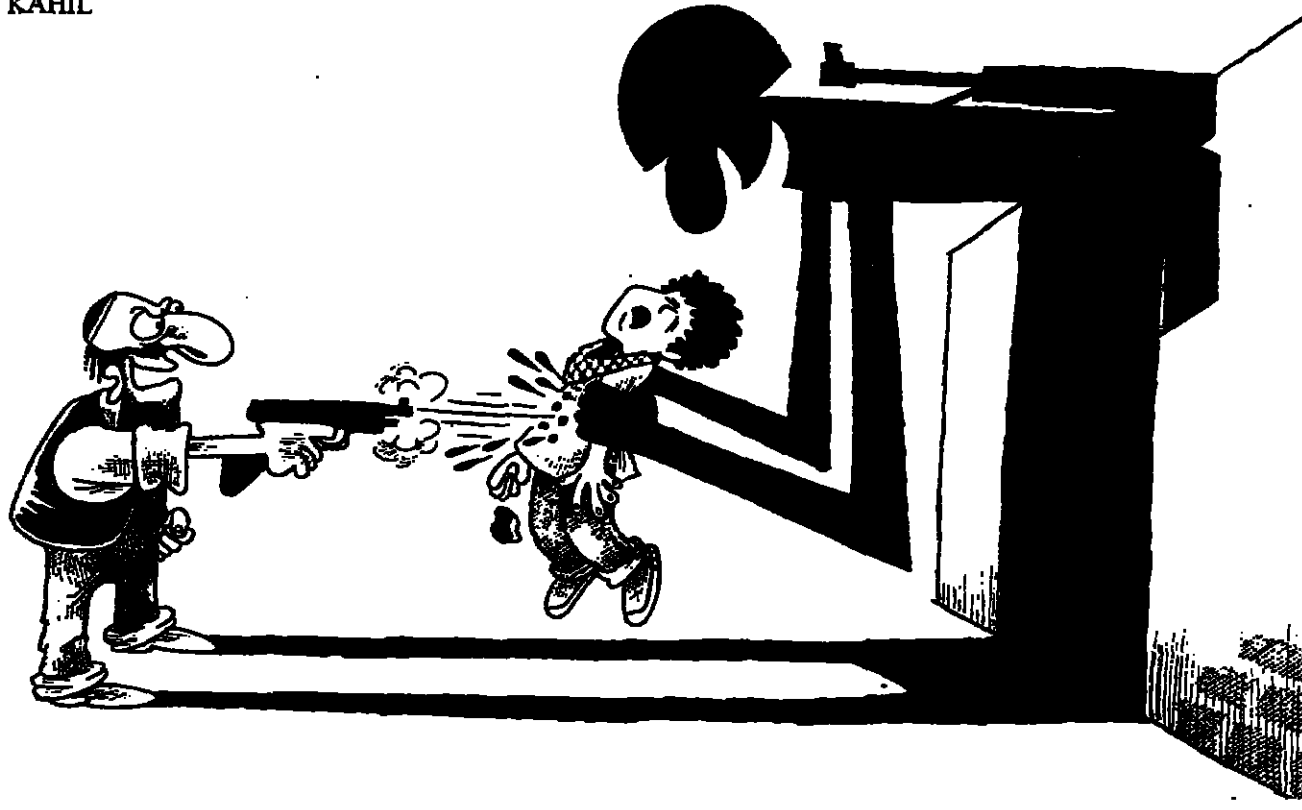
investment into the kingdom. The transfers, which total several billion dollars a year, are essential not only to provide funds for private sector expansion, but also to balance the kingdom's external payments position. The affirmation that the value of the riyal would not change stopped the speculation against the currency deal in its tracks.

The economic predicament

Essentially, the budget was a statement of intent — a public affirmation that the financial authorities recognise the challenges they face. What is more difficult to assess is the extent to which they will be able to ride out their present difficulties, restructure their economy and realign the nation's spending aspirations to the more austere realities of the late 1990s.

The kingdom's economic predicament is simply stated. Oil accounts for 75 per cent of total government revenue and

M. KAHIL



Settlers — decisive element in peace process

By Milton Vorst

NEW YORK — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, campaigning for re-election, should start by helping Jewish settlers who want to leave the occupied territories and return to Israel.

He told the Knesset last month that hundreds of settlers in Gaza had asked to be relocated. A few weeks ago, 15 families from the West Bank settlement of Ariel petitioned the government for assistance in returning to Israel. Reports indicate that thousands more may be ready to follow.

Knesset members from Mr. Rabin's Labour Party have drafted legislation calling on the government to pay compensation to settlers wishing to go back to Israel. Several Labourites have set up a hot line to assist settlers who want to leave.

Yet Mr. Rabin says he does not want to encourage

departures. He is spending government funds to complete settlement projects even though tens of thousands of apartments in the West Bank have stood vacant for months and show no prospect of being occupied.

Mr. Rabin, whose cabinet voted recently to ban two Jewish extremist groups on the West Bank was in Washington this Tuesday and conferred with President Bill Clinton on a strategy for resuming the talks. But the Palestinians, aching from the massacre at Hebron, distrust him and hesitate to return to the table. Mr. Rabin and Mr. Clinton will agree on the wording of a United Nations resolution condemning the massacre, but the Palestinians will not be satisfied with mere words.

Since the handshake in September on the White House lawn, the occupation has grown more onerous. Instead of playing with words, President Clinton might ask

Prime Minister Rabin why he refuses to start dismantling the settlements, the principal obstacle to peace.

Recent polls show that Israelis are substantially ahead of Mr. Rabin on this issue. Most seem prepared for a major curtailment of the settlements.

Paradoxically, Mr. Rabin makes no secret of his dislike for the settlers. When he was prime minister in the 1970s, he did his best to limit settlements. Nearly all of the 130,000 Jewish inhabitants of the occupied territories arrived when the right-wing Likud Party was in power.

But the settlers' power intimidates Mr. Rabin. Toting guns, they proclaim that they will defy the government if it tries to dilute their presence. Mr. Rabin, who is also defence minister, is responsible for the army's kid-gloved treatment of the extremist settlers.

Most Israelis believe, that Mr. Rabin is prepared, in time, to sacrifice the settle-

ments. But in dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), his negotiating strategy has been to give nothing away without a commensurate concession.

That may be sound in normal bargaining, but the Palestinians have little to give, and the strategy is leading to disaster. The negotiations need more goodwill.

In refusing to help settlers who want to go, Mr. Rabin is cynically bowing to the extremists. Relocation may be expensive, but it is a fore-sighted investment. Humane dealings with the settlers now will begin the erosion of their movement, making it easier for the government to confront the dichotomy later.

Mr. Clinton might well remind Mr. Rabin that Israel has not used the \$10 billion for which the United States provided loan guarantees last year. Mr. Clinton need only say the word to make the money available for resettling Israelis.

Washington has also committed money from the

Agency for International Development to Palestinian housing in the territories, the first \$25 million was authorised last month. Palestinian expatriates have offered to form consortia to invest in housing in the territories. They are ready buyers of the vacant apartments in the West Bank. Surely the quickest way for them to put the U.S. money to its intended use would be to buy the homes of Israelis who want to leave.

As the Palestinians see it, the negotiations, which began in hope, climaxed at Hebron. If Mr. Rabin is sincere in wanting to resume the talks — and I believe he is — he must show them that peace will benefit them. What better way than to help Jewish settlers go back home?

The writer is author of "Sandcastles: The Arabs in Search of the Modern World." This article is reprinted from The New York Times.

Seeds of war

By Ahmad Alami

THE HISTORY of Zionism is well known. But one question may be in order. To what extent did Theodor Herzl act on his own initiative and belief? In other words, could he have been an agent of an imperialist power who activated him and laid the ground for his movement?

The question may be pertinent or out of context, because during Herzl's time and before, nationalist feeling was sweeping Europe. It reached India, and the Arab World much later.

So Herzl himself might have been a true believer in nationalism.

But what prompts my question is the current knowledge about the methods used by the superpowers' secret services.

The superpowers have provided and may be continuing to provide covert support for certain movements in different countries. These movements may or may not be aware of such support, and their activists may even wage wars and get themselves killed because of their firm attachment to the ideals of their movements.

And all the time, the great powers may be sitting quietly laying plans to be implemented here and there on the globe, plans designed to serve the interests and grand strategies of their countries for decades and more to come.

Perhaps historians will ultimately answer my question. Time will tell. But, taking events at face value, the imperialist European powers overtly supported Zionism. Had they no axe to grind?

The history of the Jews in Europe is an unhappy one. In the diaspora of Europe, they were persecuted all along the way — in Spain, France, Germany and Britain, to varying extents.

The nationalism that spread over Europe during this century and the last contained a definite racist element.

Degrees of racism differed from one place to another. And European racism was directed at the Jews, perhaps, more than at any other race.

Thus, European support for the Zionist movement was aimed at ridding the continent of the Jews.

Imperialist designs were not confined to the Jews. Among others, they involved the Arabs as well.

It may equally be argued that the support the nationalist Arab movement got from the imperialist powers at the start of this century was directed at a winning local support against the Ottoman Empire.

Again, the support that the religious movements in the Arab World got from the imperialist powers was directed at winning public support against the growing threat of the spread of communism.

The covert methods that have been used by the superpowers' secret services in other parts of the world have been exposed to a certain extent.

Fear of a growing Arab Nation and concern about securing a safe Suez Canal, reducing the Ottoman Empire to size and having a base near the oilfields were some of the factors that prompted the imperialist powers to divide the Arab World into tiny states and create a problem that would put a stop to any Arab designs for achieving power. This is not to mention the presence of remains of the Crusader spirit.

So, starting from the beginning of this century, we find clashes between Arabs and Jews, especially between Palestinians and Jews.

Each party had its numerous advocates. Believing firmly in the justice of their causes, they were ready to kill and to die. As a result, the modern history of this area is drenched with blood and more blood.

And all of it may well have resulted from the initial designs of the European imperialist powers.

In other words: events in the region that historians will record are nothing more than the outcome of an imperialist trap directed at Jews and Arabs alike.

Historians will write that the Jews who lived in the Arab World before this century suffered no harm. They were not persecuted and nothing like what was done to them in Europe bore any similarity to the way they were treated in the Arab World.

The imperialists changed the traditional relations with the Arabs.

The Jews fell into the trap, and so did the Arabs. The real enemy of both were the imperialist powers.

The Jerusalem Post.



Parliament ends session

(Continued from page 1)

"We are shocked by the recommendation of the (House) Financial Committee that the draft law be listed on the House agenda for today," said the statement.

The front said it was boycotting the session in "protest against the means that the government resorted to in recruiting the media to promote this project without giving the other point of view the chance to make itself heard by the citizens."

The front called on all political parties, unions and activists to "continue in their stand against this project and work to reject it."

The IAF warned the government against introducing the sales tax through issuing a temporary law during the parliamentary recess.

House Speaker Taher Masri said constitutionally, the government could not resort to such a measure "because once a draft law is referred to Parliament it becomes a parliamentary property."

Outside the parliament's gates, about 200 people, mainly members of professional unions and leftist political activists, staged a three-hour sit-in protesting against the draft sales tax law.

The silent protesters waved banners and placards and distributed to passers-by and de-

puties leaflets denouncing the proposed law.

"The people say no to the sales tax," and "yes to the Jordanian people and no to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)," read the protesters' banners.

In the leaflets, the unionists argued that the sales tax "is only part of a colonialist package forced upon us by the IMF."

The parliament gates were closed and a strong police force kept a relatively distant watch as the protesters dispersed without any recorded incident of violence.

The protest was a reaffirmation that government efforts to enlist popular support for the sales tax had not borne much fruit.

Political activists and unionists argue that the tax will lead to increased price in the market despite government assertions that the levy will only replace the consumption tax which went into force in 1992 and that the expected revenues from the sales tax in fiscal 1994 is the same as that of 1993.

Furthermore, the government also points out that most basic food items, medicine and education material are exempt from the levy and that the sales tax itself is part of a comprehensive reform package for the Kingdom's taxation structure. The main amendments that the House Financial Commit-

tee has recommended to the draft law are:

— A lowering of a general sales tax on most items to seven per cent from the 10 per cent suggested by the government.

— A five-year gap between the first and second phases of the implementation of the sales tax, which, in the second stage, would be based on a value added tax system. The government had sought a three-year gap.

— Compatible changes in the customs duties on imported items so that local products would continue to have a competitive edge in the market.

— A lowering of the minimum annual turnover for companies to be covered under the sales tax law. The government had exempted all companies with annual turnovers less than JD 200,000 from the sales tax. The committee recommended that this base be lowered to JD 100,000.

Ross visits

(Continued from page 1)

for Prime Ministry affairs, Finance Minister Sami Gammoh and deputy head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks.

On the American side the talks were attended by members of the U.S. delegation accompanying Mr. Ross and U.S. ambassador to Jordan, Wesley Egan.

Later, Dr. Anani and Mr. Ross described the outcome of the talks as very good and constructive.

At a press conference held at Amman Civil Airport prior to Mr. Ross' departure to Damascus on the fourth leg of his Middle East tour, Dr. Anani said the talks dealt with developments on the Israeli-Palestinian track in the bilateral Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and the possibility of resuming these negotiations as soon as possible with the participation of all parties concerned.

Dr. Anani said the two sides also discussed bilateral relations, particularly in economy, with special focus on the siege on Aqaba.

The American side has promised to study Jordanian demands in this regard and solve the issue soon, he said.

Dr. Anani voiced hope progress would be achieved soon and positive results would emerge on the issues which were discussed.

He added that the two sides have also discussed the prospect of resuming peace negotiations on the Jordanian-Israeli track in April.

Masri gives C plus to deputies

(Continued from page 1)

issues.

Earlier, the House held its last session where a Royal decree ending the regular session was read out and then the House handled a number of items on the agenda. It passed the draft municipalities law and referred to its judicial committee a number of laws.

The rapporteur of the Financial Committee, Deputy Sa'ad Hayel Srour, read out the committee's report on the draft sales tax law and the amendments made to it by the committee.

Speaker Masri told deputies that discussion of the draft law would have to be postponed. "This is an important law which needs a long time to debate and we do not have that," Mr. Masri said, but did not specify whether an extraordinary session will be held to discuss this and other pending matters.

Islamic Action Front (IAF) deputies boycotted Tuesday's session in protest to the inclusion of the draft sales tax law on the House agenda. (See separate story).

Mr. Masri also told the House that the government had presented to Parliament,

only an hour before it went into recess, a draft law banning Freemasonry and that this also would have to wait until the next session.

Constitutionally, the draft law was supposed to be debated during this session since the government was requested by the previous parliament to draft this law. If, for the lack of time a parliament is unable to debate a law, it should be debated by its successor.

Deputy Abdul Karim Dughmi expressed "dismay" at the government's performance and said: "It is a pity that the government would refer to parliament such an important law at the last minute of its ordinary session."

The House then voted to refer the law to its Judicial Committee for study and consideration.

Usually a Royal Decree is issued calling the House for an extraordinary session. Mr. Masri told reporters that more than 50 deputies presented him with a petition requesting an extraordinary session "but this will be discussed at a later stage."

The next regular session of the House begins in October.

Deputies want talks linked to siege

(Continued from page 1)

by U.S. administration officials, but the pace of follow-up process is very slow, officials said.

Under the proposal, an independent agency shipping unit, would carry out the inspections of all cargo being unloaded at Aqaba for violations of the sanctions against Iraq.

In his comments to Deputies, Dr. Majali recalled that the government had sent a strong protest to the Security Council several weeks ago pointing out that the inspection of Jordan-bound ships at high seas was illegal and was hindering the Kingdom's regular maritime operations.

Dr. Majali was asked by deputy Abdullah Akhu Alsheikh to clarify a report that Jordan had shipped 80 tonnes of chemicals to Iraq. "For the best interests of Iraq, I prefer not to answer that question," Dr. Majali said.

Informed sources said the reported shipment was of chemicals for refinery. No further detail was immediately available.

The latest ship to be intercepted by the U.S.-led naval forces patrolling the Red Sea was the German Skyman, carrying 3,000 tonnes of cargo for Jordan, said Ibrahim Naouri, an official of the Gargour Shipping Agency.

He said the inspectors kept the vessel waiting for one day at the straits before inspecting on Saturday and ruling that cargo aboard the ship was not accessible to them for inspections.

"They checked the ship four times since then," Mr. Naouri told the Jordan Times. "The last inspection took place Tuesday afternoon."

Mr. Naouri said he had contacted the government as well as parliamentarians over the stand-off.

According to Mr. Naouri, Jordan-bound cargo aboard the Skyman include steel rods, animal feed and general cargo and the ship is not carrying any goods destined for Iraq.

At least four ships were intercepted and delayed at the Tiran Straits during February in what was seen as escalation of what Jordanian officials and shipping agents describe as intentional harassment of Aqaba-bound vessels despite American pledges to address Jordan's repeated pleas for an end to the siege of its only port.

House assails U.S. stand

(Continued from page 1)

Jordan, which saw Washington's posture as paving the way for the eventual recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Since 1967, the U.S. stand on the occupied territories had remained constant based on the rejection of Israeli occupation of the land until Friday's vote, which cast doubts on the U.S. intentions.

The American stand was viewed as an intentional precedent-setting move to eventually change its rejection of Israel's unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem.

The King said he was seeking an explanation from Washington whether there was any shift in the U.S. stand.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said after the vote that Washington did not want to prejudge the outcome of Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations by adopting any position on issues involved in the conflict.

Officials said Tuesday that the issue was to be raised during talks with U.S. envoy Dennis Ross, who was paying a

brief visit to Amman late Tuesday.

"We hope to get some explanation of the American stand and what its abstention means," said one highly-placed official (see separate story).

Tuesday's parliament statement also expressed regret that Resolution 904, adopted after "three weeks of delays and procrastination... only condemned the massacre, carried out by Zionist settlers aided by the occupation forces, and did not condemn the Israeli authorities responsible for the massacre."

The statement called on Arab leaders to put aside their differences and convene a summit conference to discuss the "situation of the Palestinian people living under Zionist occupation" and to "shoulder their responsibilities towards Palestinians who are subjected to consistent campaigns of genocide."

The House voiced appreciation "of the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and their commitment to their land and their rights" and reaffirmed Jordan's support for the Palestinian struggle for liberation.

Majali government gearing up for changes

(Continued from page 1)

confidence of the House, present it with the budget and then follow up on demands for policy statements leaving it little time to initiate ideas rather than react.

But having conceded that the House's lack of "priorities" had contributed to the government's "reactionary" role, some critics also charge that the government is responsible for its inability to impose its "weight" on parliament.

"The weight of a government determines its value," the former official said, adding that it is more imperative to "appear in control, especially when there is democracy."

"Over 50 members of the House are new and had no or very little experience in public life," another former official said. "There has to be a system to educate them on their role and rights and this can only come from the government."

The senior government official, who is close to the premier's thinking, says the government had to carry through with a new policy that did not go down well with the newly-elected parliament and contributed to the tense relations with the House by excluding parliamentarians from cabinet posts.

Critics, who believe that the government's tense relations with Parliament epitomises its lack of understanding of democratic relations between the legislative and executive authorities in the country, say this problem will continue to plague Dr. Majali unless a clear formula is found to ensure "a common agenda" between them.

"If the premier wants to indoctrinate the constitutionally separated authorities by excluding parliamentarians from government posts, it does not mean that there cannot be a common agenda," an observer of the democratisation process said.

Explaining that even in the U.S. where there is total separation of authorities between Congress and the executive authority, "the president has a common agenda with his party members because he is either a Democrat or a Republican and his congressmen will usually support his policies."

"The situation would have been different had independent presidential hopeful Ross Perot won the presidency in 1992," the observers, who did not want to be identified by name said charging that Dr. Majali has "turned himself into a Ross Perot."

"Dr. Majali should make his job easier by encouraging the deputies, apolitical as they may be, to adhere to their parliamentary blocs and develop agendas and from there try to find a common agenda with the government."

"If he did that he would be able to secure the necessary votes to pass legislation and policies through the House with minimum interference from outside."

But this policy, criticised by politicians over the past four years of democracy as a "policy of appeasement" has its arch enemies in Dr. Majali's cabinet, a senior official said. In an interview with the Jordan Times, described it as "the cowardice of democracy."

In fact, the official says, this government feels that it has had to deal with the "what was thrown to us by the pre democracy era and the cowardice of democracy" contributing to some criticism that it is undemocratic.

He said that one of the most controversial "leftovers" was the sales tax imposed on the Kingdom by dictates of the economic adjustment programme prescribed by the International Monetary Fund.

On this particular charge, members of the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, which immediately preceded the cabinet of Dr. Majali, say that accusation simplified the matter.

"The House had ended its regular session and the Bureau of Legislation ruled that it was unconstitutional to issue the sales tax law through temporary legislation," a member of the former cabinet said.

"It would have also been politically naive to call an extraordinary session to discuss the imposing of more taxes when the House's days were numbered and deputies were going back to their constituencies for reelection," he said adding that the "sales tax would have been killed there and then."

The Majali government has also drawn some criticism for being "undemocratic" from the influential Islamic Action Front (IAF) which feels targeted by the policies of this government.

On this charge, perhaps, the government of Dr. Majali has some support from some of its critics. "All previous governments spent time working out ways and means to block the agenda of the Brotherhood as if this has become the role of a government," a former senior official maintained.

And Dr. Majali's cabinet, according to the government official, "was blocking their (IAF's) undemocracy by practising democracy."

The official cites the example of government appointed speakers at mosques for Friday noon prayers. "We tried to distribute these speakerships democratically among different Islamist trends in the country, but the Brotherhood wanted control of all the mosques."

initial argument that the actions of Dr. Majali's cabinet have to be assessed only from the time they gained the vote of confidence, thereby abandoning responsibility for changing the elections law widely believed to target the Islamist representation in Parliament.

The senior official further maintains that democratic practices have been furthered because of the government's respect for parliamentary checks and balances in its policies.

"We have been working quietly to bring balance and control the traditional forces in the country from reasserting themselves," the official said.

In answer to questions on the state of prisons in the Kingdom from an Islamist deputy, the official said, "We are setting a government committee to visit all prisons in the country including the prison at the intelligence department."

"We are working democratically but we keep a low profile," he said.

Where Dr. Majali has succeeded in quietly making progress is probably in distancing his government from the party of his brother, Karak Deputy Abdul Hadi Majali. After a series of senior appointments, Dr. Majali was criticised for appointing favourites of Al Ahd party and other influential political supporters of his government.

"Now the premier has halted all appointments and delegated the responsibility of choosing candidates to a four-member ministerial committee that will make the selections without influence from any political circle," the senior official told the Jordan Times.

The remaining problem, and an apparently recurring one, is that of statements of Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas criticising the performance of employees at

his ministry and lashing out at lobby groups in the country trying to hinder his new policies on drug and food control.

When Dr. Malhas first declared the "our food and drugs are garbage," Dr. Majali supported his minister despite wide-spread rumours that he might follow the example of former prime ministers who would have immediately excluded mavericks.

Dr. Malhas also gained support from His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan who supported his calls for improving the standards of control on import food and medicine.

But Dr. Malhas, according to analysts and officials, over-extended himself with a second interview in which he accused the two deputy prime ministers of censoring his statements in a television interview over his first interview.

Sources close to the government told the Jordan Times this week that the premier asked the minister to "work on rehabilitating his ministry quietly" and stop creating public embarrassments.

Analysts believe that Dr. Malhas, who lost two cases brought against him in court, is spending more time on gaining public support and less time on working at the affairs of his ministry.

In general, officials, critics and analysts agree that the premier's patience has so far paid off in his favour and the fact that he is personally well accepted by Jordanians and Jordanians of Palestinian origin will continue to serve him.

"Now all he needs he is to bring in politicians to his cabinet and widen his agenda to meet more demands of the Lower House of Parliament. He is still the best man for this time in Jordan's history," a former senior official said.

UNRWA Headquarters in Wadi Seer (Bayader)

is looking to recruit as soon as possible:

A. INSTRUCTION MATERIALS EDITOR (ARABIC)

to assist in the organization and management of the Correspondence Education Unit and acts as Coordinator of the Student Teacher Journal; edits in and translates to Arabic instruction materials for the Department of Education and checks, proofreads materials and supervises related work; compiles timely up-dates of glossary of Arabic educational terms etc. As Student / Teacher Journal Coordinator solicits articles, recruit writers, receives/distributes scripts to the Editorial Board, convenes meetings of this Board, edits selected articles in Arabic, coordinates contracts, layout and design etc. Participates/conducts seminars, summer courses and activities. Excellent command of Arabic and v.g. English, University degree in Arabic, additional studies in English, Diploma in Education (or at least one-year Teacher Training Course) are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD. 453.60 plus dependency allowances).

B. GENERAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST (SOCIAL STUDIES)

conducts analytical evaluation and proposes enrichment and development of curricula and methods of subject teaching in Agency schools; conducts research studies on topics as attitudes, values, behavior modification; provides Education Development Centers with other practical and innovative plans for effective subject teaching; prepares guidelines for School Supervisors for the development of self-learning materials aiming at improving the subject achievements of Agency students; prepares core curricula/syllabuses for the subject teaching; prepares teacher guides, audio-videogrammes, Updates teaching aids requirements; supervises the subject teaching; participates in organizing in-service training courses; provides guidance in subject related pedagogical and teaching methods. Very good knowledge of English and Arabic, Advanced University Degree in Social Studies, Education Diploma (or at least one-years Teacher Training Course) and competence in preparing curriculum enrichment and self-learning materials are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD. 556.10 p.m plus dependency allowances).

(C) SUPPLY ASSISTANT (MOTOR TRANSPORT - VEHICLE OPERATIONS)

edits/reviews indents for stock positioning, collects data on vehicle operations including spare parts and enters into PC databank; maintains Agency fleet records; ensures continuous insurance coverage of the fleet; maintains records of suppliers' micro-fiche catalogues; collates statistical returns on fleet operations and maintenance; up-dates Motor-Transport reports and drafts and types correspondence related to MT technical matters. Very good knowledge of English and Arabic, completed secondary education, 2-year business course, Computer literacy (e.g. MS Word, Lotus 123, D-base, Paradox) with ability to understand local Area Network concepts from user perspective are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD. 325 p.m. plus dependency allowances).

(D) SUPPLY ASSISTANT (MOTOR TRANSPORT - FOLLOW UP)

assists with ordering of vehicles and their assignment, specially with checking and following up of orders, insurance and shipping documentation; maintains registers; drafts correspondence and maintains work related records. Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English and Arabic, completed secondary education, 2-years business course, five years clerical experience related to supply or transport operations, working knowledge (literacy) of PC softwares such as MS WORD, LOTUS 123, D-base, Paradox and ability to understand Local Area Network (LAN) computer concepts are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD. 325 p.m. plus dependency allowances).

(E) PURCHASING OFFICER (MOTOR TRANSPORT)

prepares periodic reviews and related correspondence; carries out market research, contacts suppliers, prepares tender documents, analyses quotations for vehicles and spareparts; updates records and catalogues; follows-up on movements and orders; drafts related correspondence and maintains appropriate records. Stands in for the Deputy Motor Transport Officer during absences. University Degree in Business Administration, commerce or related discipline; six years office and supply experience, of which 4 must be in procurement of vehicles, spare parts and accessories, with use of PC (working knowledge of MS WORD, Lotus 123, D-base, Paradox), ability to understand concepts of Local Area Networks (LAN) and excellent command of English and Arabic are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD 450 p.m. plus dependency allowances).

(F) DEPUTY MOTOR TRANSPORT OFFICER

inspects Agency vehicles and workshops, provides technical advice to the Field Supply and Transport Officers and Vehicle Maintenance Officers; reviews monthly operational returns for excessive cost, use or consumption (accounting and statistical functions); advises on all matters related to Agency vehicle workshops, including procedures, staffing and training; is responsible for the vehicle replacement programme, including review of field requests, ordering, inventory control, periodic reviews, inter-field transfers and vehicle surveys (disposal); assists the Motor Transport Officer in negotiations with suppliers and contractors and other professional matters.

University Degree in Mechanical Engineering with studies in business administration, seven years experience in motor transport operations and stock control with computer use, working knowledge of PC software (MS Word, Lotus 123, D-base, Paradox), ability to understand the concepts of PC Local Area Networks (LAN) as a user, driving license (ability to obtain one in each field Lebanon / SAR / Jordan / West Bank / Gaza) as well as excellent commands of English and Arabic are Essential; and knowledge of other languages (French, German, Italian) desirable.

(Starting salary about JD. 555 p.m. plus dependency allowances).

UNRWA HEADQUARTERS IN Wadi Seer (Bayader)

is looking to recruit as soon as possible:

G. SENIOR AUDITOR (EDP) - POST IS RE-ADVERTIZED

Excellent command of English and Arabic, a University degree in computer Science or related field, membership in a professional body of accountants (e.g. ICA, ICMA) a minimum of ten years auditing experience with a mix between EDP auditing (security and financial), operational or program auditing are ESSENTIAL.

(Starting salary about JD. 700 plus dependency allowances)

H. PROGRAMME PLANNING AND EVALUATION STATISTICIAN

to be responsible for the collection, recording, development, analysis maintenance and control of its Programme Planning and Evaluation Office's statistical data base and its supporting documentation unit on Palestine refugees. The incumbent is also responsible for the development and control of a sound reporting system of the statistical information by way of periodic and ad hoc reports, including the semi-annual issuance of UNRWA General Information Sheet; coordination of the collection and verification of statistical data with other United Nations organizations, NGOs and host government's authorities; preparation of short and long-term projections of statistical data to assist in UNRWA planning and budgeting activities, preparation of periodic and updated statistical reports tailored to specific needs of programme and Field Directors.

Essential requirements:

1. University degree in statistics, economics or business administration.
2. Knowledge of computer science and its application to statistics and evaluation.
3. A minimum of five years' experience in the application of the knowledge acquired in (1) and (2) above including research and evaluation in socio-economic fields.
4. Excellent knowledge of spoken and written English.

(starting salary about J.D 672.405 p/m plus dependency allowance)

I. PROGRAMME PLANNING AND EVALUATION OFFICERS

to perform professional work as members of the planning and Evaluation office which provides advice to the Agency's executive staff at Headquarters. The incumbents are responsible to undertake organizational, operational and related studies with a view to ensuring cost effective and efficient operations of a wide variety of large-scale programmes administered by the Agency. They assist in planning and evaluation studies of the efficiency and effectiveness of Agency organization, work methods and resource utilization, involving the application of organization and methods, operations research, work study and system analysis techniques. They assist in coordinating the development of Agency plans and in establishing and reviewing performance indicators and evaluation criteria for such plans.

Essential requirements:

1. University degree in economics, management science, business studies, human resource management or related field.
2. Six years experience in the application of the knowledge acquired in 1 above in a large international, governmental or commercial organizational involving evaluation studies, organizational analysis, research work and related disciplines including five years at senior level.
3. Fluent command of spoken and written English and Arabic.

(starting salary about J.D 672.405 p/m plus dependency allowance)

N.B. Normally many applications are received. Only those applicants will be contacted in whom the Agency has a further interest.

Applications should be addressed to

COORDINATOR, UNRWA Headquarters

Wadi Seer (Bayader)

P.O.Box 484, A M M A N

or Fax 826177, not Later than 30 March 1994

PIA PROUD IN PROMOTING
JORDAN PAKISTAN
FRIENDSHIP
HEARTIEST GREETINGS
ON PAKISTAN DAY
23 MARCH 1994

aims at stability, economic reform, social justice

sponsored to the new economic package of liberalisation and privatisation.

Industry

Industry is the second largest commodity producing sector which contributes 16 per cent to the GDP. The sector absorbs 12.69 per cent of the total employed labour force in the country. It accounts for 70 per cent of the country's exports with cotton textiles, leather and footwear, carpets, sports goods, surgical instruments and petroleum products contributing a substantial share.

Today the country is not only self-sufficient in several of the essential consumer goods but is making rapid strides in the establishment of sophisticated capital goods industries. Big textile mills, cement, fertilisers and chemical plants, oil refineries, vast complexes of manufacturing industrial machinery and capital goods, factors, trucks and motor cars, assembly plants, railway carriages and rolling stocks manufacturing yards, ship-building yards and sprawling industrial estates produce a

host of consumer and capital goods spread all over the country.

Mineral development

A mineral development policy has been framed to accelerate the pace of development in this area by providing attractive packages to increase local and foreign investment in the joint ventures.

Education

The government of Pakistan is a signatory to the 1990 World Conference on Education For All, which aims at universalising primary education by the year 2000.

To overcome the shortage of primary school teachers and to involve them in gainful employment, a programme of training 10,000 primary school teachers through the distance education system of Allama Iqbal Open University has been launched at a cost of Rs. 25.00 million. These teachers will be available for teaching in formal and non-formal schools throughout the country.

The number of universities in the country is 23 with a total



Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto inaugurating the First Locomotive Engine produced at Pakistan Locomotive Factory at Risalpur on December 2, 1993.

enrollment of 82,040 persons for post-graduate disciplines and manned by 4,573 teachers. The objectives of the state policy in this area is to bring about a real qualitative improvement at this highest level of education and encourage research and specialisation.

to building a prosperous future.

Pakistan-Jordan relations
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan enjoy very close and cordial relations which are characterised by religious, historic and cultural affinities, commonality of views on important regional and international issues, cooperation in various fields and moral and material support rendered by the two countries to each other in time of need.

Pakistan has strong economic, trade, cultural and military cooperation with Jordan. Under the Cultural Agreement, Pakistan presently provides 31 seats to Jordanian students in various professional fields. Out of these, three are offered with scholarship by the Ministry of Education. Besides these, any number of students can avail themselves of university education in Pakistani educational institutions on a self-financing basis.

Jordan also avails training programmes in railway courses and commercial banking. Jordan also offers three scholarships to Pakistani students in various educational institutions every year.

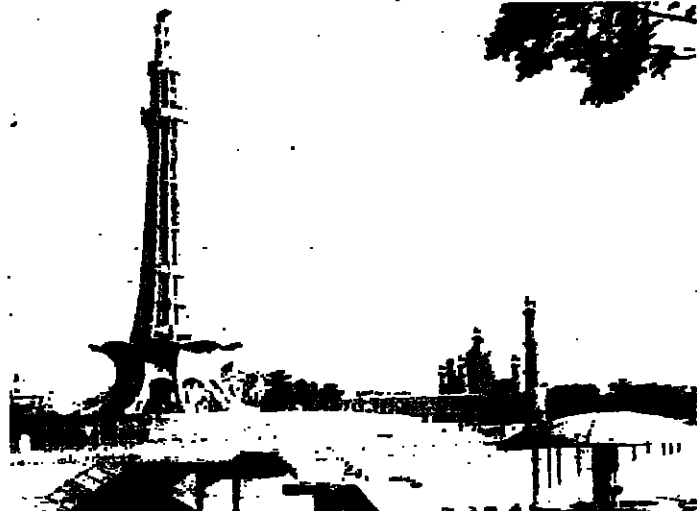
state and governments from Pakistan also.

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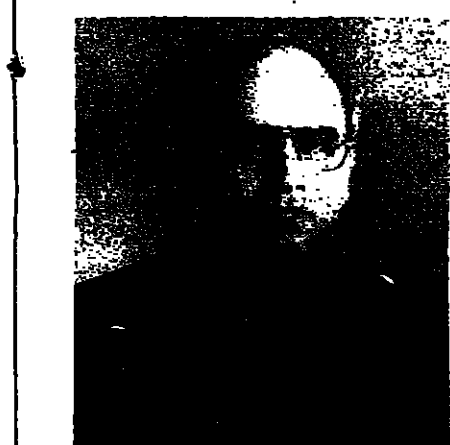
Jordan also avails training programmes in railway courses and commercial banking. Jordan also offers three scholarships to Pakistani students in various educational institutions every year.



A view of Shalimar Garden, Lahore



Minar-e-Pakistan, Lahore, built at the place where Pakistan Resolution was passed in 1940.



Best wishes and heartest congratulations on Pakistan's National Day

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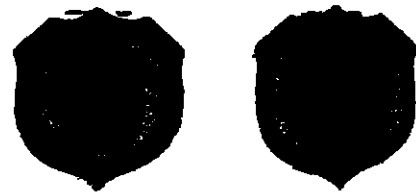
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Pakistan's National Day

and wish Pakistan and its people further prosperity, security and stability.

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Seoul prepares last-ditch diplomacy to avert crisis

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam ordered his country's armed forces on defensive alert Tuesday but prepared a last-ditch diplomatic effort to avert a crisis over North Korea's nuclear programme.

A presidential spokesman said Mr. Kim told army, navy and air force chiefs to heighten defences because of rising tension over the North's refusal to permit full inspection of its nuclear sites, where the West fears it is making a bomb.

Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo said Seoul would not resort to hardline policies in efforts to resolve the crisis.

"At this stage, emotional hardline policies towards the North will hamper efforts by the international community to settle the nuclear problem," Mr. Han told a meeting of leaders of the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP).

"The government will maintain the basic strategy to block the North's nuclear development but in a way to avert war on the Korean peninsula."

Seoul fears the unpredictable North, reeling from the collapse of Communist allies and a slumping economy, might launch a military attack on the South if driven into a corner, analysts say.

Mr. Han said dialogue between the United States and North Korea was a "key factor in checking the North's destructive acts as well as in inducing the North to allow nuclear inspections."

Washington called off high-level talks with the North, originally scheduled for Monday in Geneva, after Pyongyang refused to allow full inspections of its declared nuclear sites.

President Kim would seek the active help of China, North Korea's only major ally, in getting Pyongyang to end its nuclear ambitions during his talks with Chinese leaders in Beijing next week, Mr. Han said.

Mr. Han, meeting reporters later, said Seoul would support

U.N. sanctions against the North if efforts to resolve the nuclear row through dialogue ended in failure.

On Monday, 25 countries on the 35-member International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) board of governors adopted a resolution urging North to drop its resistance to full inspections.

American U.N. envoy Madeleine Albright said Monday the United States had prepared a Security Council resolution calling on North Korea to permit full inspections. The draft did not provide for sanctions, she said.

The United States decided Monday to deploy the anti-missile Patriot missiles in South Korea and revised plans for Team Spirit military exercises on the peninsula.

Officials in South Korea said Patriot missiles would be deployed at key sites around Seoul, barely 30 miles (48 km) from the border with the North.

Mr. Kim said the timing for resumption of the Team Spirit exercises, provisionally suspended just a few weeks ago in a conciliatory gesture to the North, would be decided after he returns from trips to Japan and China.

Mr. Kim will hold talks with Japanese Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa Thursday and Friday and with Chinese President Jiang Zemin next Monday.

On the agenda in Kim-Hosokawa talks will be the Japanese government's steps to stop the transfer of hard currency from Japan to North Korea in case of any U.N. sanctions against North Korea, a Seoul government official said.

The North renewed its threat this week to withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear weapons.

Tensions seemed to have eased last month after North Korea agreed to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA) to examine seven nuclear sites.

But the inspectors were denied access to some of the most sensitive facilities, prompting the cancellation of high-level talks between the United States and North Korea and the collapse of North-South negotiations aimed at easing tensions.

Chinese Premier Li Peng Tuesday strongly reaffirmed China's opposition to applying pressure on North Korea over its nuclear programme, but stopped short of saying that Beijing would use its U.N. Security Council veto on the issue.

Mr. Li told a news conference that if the North Korean nuclear issue came before the U.N. Security Council, China would stick to its position that it should be resolved by dialogue and negotiations.

"China does not stand for pressure," Mr. Li said. "If pressure is applied, that can only complicate the situation on the Korean peninsula and add to the tension there."

Meanwhile, CIA Director James Woolsey said Monday it is the best estimate of the U.S. intelligence services that North Korea has diverted enough material to build at least one nuclear bomb.

"Our best estimate in the intelligence community is that they have diverted enough material, more likely than not, to manufacture at least one weapon," the CIA chief said.

"I have to say that is not entirely free from doubt. There are some disagreements. But... the weight of opinion in the intelligence community is that they have reprocessed enough material to make at least one weapon," Mr. Woolsey said on the Public Broadcasting Service's MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour.

Mr. Woolsey said North Korea was a closed society whose motivation in the nuclear arena was unclear. But he said that its enunciated goals, taken at face value, were "really quite chilling."

NEWS IN BRIEF

China parliament calls for stability

BEIJING (R) — The chief of China's parliament closed the annual legislative session Tuesday with a plea to delegates to fan out back into the countryside carrying Beijing's message that in 1994 stability is everything. Qiao Shi, president of the National People's Congress, told 3,000 delegates that healthy growth depended on keeping the social situation under control in an era of enormous economic changes. "We must correctly handle relations between reform, development and stability," Mr. Qiao said in a closing speech in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. "We must strive to push ahead with reform and development amid stability, and achieve social stability and the country's long-term stability through reform and development," he said.

Gore calms Brazil fears over Amazon

BRASILIA (R) — Vice President Al Gore, moving to calm Brazilian fears over foreign interference in the resource-rich Amazon, said Monday that Brazil could rest assured the United States had no territorial designs on the region. "People in Brazil think the United States has designs on the Amazon, plans to invade the Amazon. When we in the U.S. hear these comments we are completely mystified," Mr. Gore said during a meeting in Brasilia with representatives of different sectors of Brazil's society. "We have no thoughts of anything remotely resembling that," the vice president told his audience, which included leaders of Amazon Indian tribes. Mr. Gore, who was on a six-hour visit in Brazil, the third and last stop of a two-day South American tour, said the idea of the United States invading the Amazon was comparable to thinking that Brazilians wanted to invade Florida. Western diplomats said his remarks appeared in part to be aimed at soothing past Brazilian diplomatic and military sensitivity over training manoeuvres involving U.S. troops carried out in neighbouring Latin American states which border on the vast Amazon region. Mr. Gore earlier met Brazilian President Itamar Franco.

Hale accepts plea bargain in Whitewater

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas (R) — David Hale, a former Arkansas judge who has implicated President Bill Clinton in a Whitewater-related controversy, will plead guilty Tuesday to two criminal charges in U.S. District Court at Little Rock. Sources said that Mr. Hale, who is already under indictment for submitting falsified documents to the small business administration, will also admit guilt to another undisclosed charge involving non-defunct Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan. Mr. Hale's trial was to begin next Monday in Little Rock, sources say his plea bargain agreement with special prosecutor Robert Fiske provides that Mr. Hale testify before a special grand jury investigating the business affairs of President and Mrs. Clinton. Mr. Hale owned a business development company, Capital Management Services Inc. of Little Rock, that loaned \$300,000 in 1986 to Susan McDougal, wife of Jim McDougal, chairman of Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan. Investigators are trying to determine if any of the loan proceeds were funnelled to the Whitewater Development corp. in which the McDougals were partners with then-Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas and his wife, Hillary. Mr. Hale has said he was pressured to make the loan by Mr. Clinton and Mr. McDougal, even though they allegedly knew the proceeds would not be used for the purposes stated on the loan application.

Clinton attacks Republican

BAL HARBOUR, Florida (R) — President Bill Clinton said Republicans fighting his agenda, including health care reform were "in a snit" because they no longer controlled the White House. "The Republican Party has not always been against change. It has not always been obsessed with personal power and just in a snit because they didn't have the White House," Mr. Clinton said at a Democratic Party dinner that raised \$3.5 million. Saying the Republicans have contributed strong leaders and ideas in the past, Mr. Clinton lamented that "today, instead of that, they don't offer a lot of new ideas. And they often offer blatant, blind, partisan opposition." Earlier, in Deerfield Beach, Mr. Clinton charged that conservative Republicans were leading the fight against his drive to reform the health care system. "The opponents of our plan are trying to confuse the issue by making it seem complicated. They ignore the fact that the system we have today is the most complicated on the face of the earth," Mr. Clinton said at an outdoor rally.

Christopher defends China trip

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher defended his recent trip to China, which has come under heavy criticism and led to a clash with Beijing over a U.S. linkage of trade status and human rights policy. "Some say I should have cancelled my trip, particularly in the face of the Chinese government's deplorable efforts to silence its citizens. But that course would have been a grave error," Mr. Christopher wrote in Tuesday's Washington Post newspaper. "I went to Beijing to carry out the president's policy and to make sure that the Chinese government, at the highest levels, does not misunderstand our nation's policy commands and underestimate the strong support that our policy commands from Congress and the American people," he wrote in an opinion piece printed opposite the Post's editorial page. "Despite some of the atmospherics, I believe that this message now has been clearly received by China's leaders, and I believe that they now realise that complacency is not an option," he wrote. The United States is pressing China to correct alleged human rights abuses and has threatened to withdraw the country's so-called most favoured nation (MFN) trade status if China fails to improve its human rights record in seven areas.

30,000 Cambodians flee fighting

BANGKOK (R) — About 30,000 Cambodians have sought refuge in Thailand since the weekend capture by government forces of the Khmer Rouge's Pailin stronghold, Thai Defence Minister Vajit Sookkarn said Tuesday. He said the refugees had been allowed to cross into Thailand and would be allowed to stay until the situation returned to normal. Among the exodus of overloaded bicycles, ox carts and motorcycles were several hundred Khmer Rouge guerrillas, dressed in their distinctive green uniforms but without weapons. Thailand, which vehemently denies assisting the rebels, has said it would allow unarmed Cambodians to cross into Thailand purely on humanitarian grounds. The Cambodian army believe the success of the Pailin operation had largely broken the back of the rebel resistance for the moment. But on Monday, the army continued to pour in reinforcements into the former Khmer Rouge headquarters fearing the possibility of a counterattack. Meanwhile, more than 20 Cambodian civilians, most of them family of government border policemen, fled to Thailand near the Thai border town of Aranyaprathet, about 100 kilometres north of Pailin.

Britons fear crime more than ever — survey

LONDON (R) — Britons are becoming more afraid of crime than ever before, a survey found. The government said a spate of horrific murders, including the "house of horror" serial killing in Gloucester in which nine bodies have been found and two-year-old James Bulger's murder by a pair of 10-year-olds, was partly responsible. But the Home Office (Interior Ministry), responsible for police and crime issues, said a real increase in crime had also frightened people. "Crime has risen and people are understandably concerned," a spokesman said. But he added: "The vast majority of crime — 95 per cent of crime — is property crime rather than violent crime." According to the survey, done by Mori for Readers Digest magazine, most people — 77 per cent of the 2,000 interviewed — fear burglary. Only 60 per cent said they feared burglary in the last survey in 1987. The survey found 78 per cent of women under 25 were afraid of being raped while 57 per cent of all women said it was a worry. Most people, 72 per cent, blamed drugs as a cause of crime while 71 per cent blamed unemployment and 69 per cent said a lack of parental discipline was responsible. Government figures show recorded crime in England and Wales rose 3.8 per cent in 1992 to a record 5.7 million offences. More than one offence for every 10 people. Recorded crime has risen 74 per cent over the last 10 years but only 26 per cent of crimes are solved by police — down from 37 per cent in 1982. Curbing crime is a huge political issue and is a cornerstone of Prime Minister John Major's "back to basics" campaign. But while the government proposes stronger sentencing laws, most people surveyed said they would rather have more police on the beat.

High winds hamper North pole expedition

VANCOUVER (R) — A British explorer aiming to become the first person to walk to the North Pole alone and without help is making extremely slow progress, his publicist said Tuesday. Rupert Hadow has managed to cover only about 14 miles (22 km) in the first two weeks of his trek because of high winds and whiteouts, the publicity firm said. Mr. Hadow had expected to average about 10 miles (16 km) a day to finish the 630-mile (1,010-km) journey from a remote island in Canada's arctic to the pole in about two months. "The weather's been holding him back, but it's forecast to improve. He's optimistic," said publicist Julie Wellik. Mr. Hadow suffered frostbite to one finger but is otherwise in good condition, she said. If he succeeds, Mr. Hadow will be the first person to reach the pole on foot and without help from dogs, motor transport or air support, his public relations firm said. But he is racing against Japan's Mitsuo Oba, who set off from the northern tip of Russia for the pole in late February. Norwegian Borge Ousland is also seeking to make the same journey but left after Mr. Oba. No word was available on their progress.

Betrayed wife pours hot wax on husband's genitals

STOCKTON, England (R) — A woman enraged at revelations of her husband's adultery poured melted wax on his genitals while he was asleep, a British court heard Monday. The prosecution said Dianne Sladek, 48, sought revenge in the attack after a pair of her husband Michael's boxer shorts were posted to the house with a note from his alleged lover. "At 2 a.m. neighbours heard the most awful scream, Mr. Sladek's wife had gone down to the kitchen, taken five household candles, melted them in a pan on the stove and taken them back up to the bedroom," prosecutor David Griston told the court. "He awoke in agony as molten candle wax was being tipped over him. It was painful as it covered his genitalia, his thigh and left hand," Mr. Griston told the court in northeast England. Mr. Sladek, 45, needed extensive skin grafts in hospital and has been unable to work since the attack nearly a year ago. But in court he made a tearful plea that his estranged wife not be sent to prison, saying he did not want revenge.

Buthlezi alleges ANC plot to topple him

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi has accused Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) of plotting to topple him before North Africa's first all-race elections in April.

Sue Vos, a spokeswoman for Mr. Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party, said in a statement the allegation was based on a four-page ANC document "urging supporters to 'prepare the anvil for the coming hammer' in his self-governing KwaZulu homeland."

"The contents of this document go far beyond robust politics and we believe the proposals, if implemented, would plunge KwaZulu/Natal into full-scale civil war," she said.

At least 44 people have died since Saturday in political violence mainly between the ANC and Inkatha in KwaZulu and Natal province.

Zulus sought to enforce Mr. Buthelezi's declared boycott of the country's April 26-28 election by occupying stadiums due to have been used for ANC rallies.

Ms. Vos said Mr. Buthelezi sent a copy of the alleged ANC document Monday to Judge Richard Goldstone, head of an independent inquiry into all forms of political violence in South Africa.

Judge Goldstone last week named senior Inkatha officials in a report alleging that senior police officers could have been involved in gun-running to the conservative Zulu faction.

Several senior officers including deputy police chief General Basie Smit have been suspended and the multi-party Transitional Executive Council (TEC) was expected to name an international panel to investigate the judge's allegations.

Meanwhile, an explosion severely damaged an office of South Africa's ruling National Party (NP) in a right-wing area of the Western Transvaal Monday night, police said Tuesday.

It was the second explosion in two days in Ventersdorp, 125 kilometres west of Johannesburg. A petrol station was damaged in a blast Sunday night.

Spielberg's Schindler's List sweeps Oscars

LOS ANGELES (Agencies) — Steven Spielberg, who has created Hollywood's biggest box-office hits only to be snubbed every year on Oscar night, finally broke his legendary jinx Monday night as his Holocaust epic Schindler's List swept the Academy Awards.

Ending what Spielberg, 46, tearfully called "the longest drought of my life," his stark, black-and-white film won seven awards — more than any other contender — including Best Picture, Best Director and Screenplay Adaptation.

Tom Hanks picked up the Best Actor Award for his portrayal of a lawyer with AIDS in Philadelphia, and Holly Hunter was named best actress for her role in The Piano as a mute Scottish mail-order bride in 19th-century New Zealand.

From the very day the nominations were announced, Schindler's List — which was up for 12 awards — was considered a sure bet to dominate the Oscars and break Spielberg's string of losses spanning two decades.

But his heart may have skipped a beat when presenter Clint Eastwood opened the envelope and said "this is a big surprise" before naming him the winner for Best Director.

"I have friends who have won this before and I swear I haven't even held one before," Spielberg told the awards audience. His voice cracking with emotion.

Only minutes later, he re-

turned to the stage to accept his Best Picture Award. Wiping away tears.

The dinosaur epic Jurassic Park — another Spielberg creation — and Jane Campion's The Piano provided the closest competition. Each winning three Oscars. Campion lost directing honours to Spielberg but won for Best Original Screenplay.

The strident political statements that marked last year's post-election Oscars were replaced Monday night by mostly sentimental speeches and plenty of tears.

"The streets of heaven are too crowded with angels," Hanks, his voice quaking, said in tribute to AIDS victims. "They number a thousand for each of the red ribbons we wear."

Creating one of the biggest generation gaps in Academy Awards history, veteran actor Tommy Lee Jones, 47, and 11-year-old first-time actress Anna Paquin won Oscars for Best Supporting Roles.

Paquin was the evening's biggest surprise. So stunned by her triumph over actresses four times her age that she was left teary-eyed and literally speechless as she accepted the award for her role in The Piano.

The pixie-faced New Zealander was the second youngest performer ever to win a competitive Academy Award. Tatum O'Neil was 10 when she took the Best Supporting Actress Oscar for the

1973 Paper Moon.

While Campion's elegant romance The Piano gave stiff competition, Spielberg's three-hour-plus drama captured the hearts — and ballots — of Oscar voters.

It was an emotional and triumphant moment for Spielberg, who had been nominated for directing skills three times before — for E.T., Raiders of the Lost Ark and Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

Twice — with Jaws and The Colour Purple — he received the ultimate snub. His films were nominated but he was not.

Some critics said the man who made his name as a master of escapism — and created four of the 10 top-grossing films of all time — had always fallen short of Oscar-winning quality. But Hollywood insiders believe jealousy over his success also played a role.

It took Schindler's List — the true story of a German war profiteer who saved more than 1,300 Polish Jews from the Nazis — for Spielberg to finally win Hollywood's respect.

Filmed on location in Poland, the movie marked for Spielberg a culmination of more than a decade of preparation.

The director has promised to take a break from filmmaking, but the Los Angeles Times reported he is now cooking up high-tech deals that would give his production company a role in the nation's emerging information superhighway.

Paquin, who played the obstinate daughter to Hunter's character in The Piano, gushed to reporters backstage: "This can't be happening. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh."

Jones, the son of a Texas cowboy who went on to become one of Hollywood's most respected movie veterans, won Best Supporting Actor for his role as a relentless lawman in The Fugitive. A remake of the 1960s television series.

The Spanish film Belle Époque, a romantic tale set in the 1930s, won the Oscar for Best Foreign-Language Film, beating out entries from Hong Kong, Britain, Taiwan and Vietnam.

When the curtain rose on the 66th Annual Academy Awards, a global television audience estimated at upward of one billion in 98 countries was watching.

Whoopi Goldberg, hosting for the first time after Billy Crystal declined to make a fifth

straight appearance, kicked off the festivities, saying she first wanted to get something off her chest in the "political soap-box department."

Then, in rapid-fire succession: "Save the whales, save the spotted owl, gay rights, men's rights, women's rights, human rights, feed the homeless, more gun control, free the Chinese dissidents, peace in Bosnia..."

Anxiety was running high at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion one day after a strong earthquake rumbled through the area, interrupting rehearsals for Hollywood's biggest, glitziest show.

Many among the army of workers and entertainers were visibly shaken Sunday, but the Academy Awards' producers vowed that "the show must go on."

Provided most of the drama, peppering her remarks with raunchy humour that drew laughter and some gasps from the star-studded audience.

"So they went and gave me a live microphone for three hours. There haven't been so many show business executives sweating and so nervous over one woman since Heidi Fleiss," Goldberg said in her opening monologue, referring to the alleged Hollywood madam who claimed to have a book of movie executive and celebrities who were her clients.

Oscar presenters included past winners Anthony Hopkins, Al Pacino, Gene Hackman, Clint Eastwood, Geena Davis, Goldie Hawn, Jeremy Irons and Emma Thompson, as well as Tom Cruise, Nicole



American actress Holly Hunter and actor Tom Hanks pose with their Oscars during the 66th Annual Academy Awards ceremony after winning respectively the awards for Best Actress and Best Actor. (AFP photo)

Kidman, Glenn Close, Elijah Wood, Johnny Depp, Jeff Bridges and Alec Baldwin. This year's theme was the people behind the camera. A special feature was a ballet to music from the nominated scores.

Two stellar awards had been announced in advance: Paul Newman, whose salad dressing, spaghetti sauce and other food products benefit a variety of charities, received the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award.

Long overlooked for the Best Actor Oscar, Newman received an honorary award in 1986 for a career that included



U.S. Director Steven Spielberg poses with his two Oscars during the 66th Annual Academy Awards ceremony after winning the 1993 awards

for Best Director and Best Picture for his movie Schindler's List. (AFP photo)



Actress Anne Paquin of New Zealand poses with the 1993 Oscar she won for Best Supporting Actress during the 66th annual Academy Awards. Paquin, 11, won for her performance in the movie The Piano (AFP photo)



Captain of the German national soccer team Lothar Matthäus gives the thumbs-up sign during a photo call presenting the New Jersey for the upcoming World Cup (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Vandals damage Berlin soccer headquarters

BERLIN (AP) — Vandals protesting a soccer match between Germany and England scheduled on Adolf Hitler's birthday smashed windows and splashed acid into a building housing Berlin's soccer association. Association Manager Reiner Gentz said the attackers sprayed slogans on the building late Sunday saying "no national game on April 20" and "oppose DFB and Nazis." DFB is the abbreviation for the German Soccer Federation. Leftist and violence-prone anarchist groups in Berlin distributed leaflets recently calling for protests against holding the soccer match on the 105th anniversary of Hitler's birth. The game had previously been scheduled in the port city of Hamburg, but authorities there cancelled it fearing violence by English and German radical rightist groups. Officials in Berlin offered to host the game, and the DFB announced Jan. 26 the game would take place April 20 at the city's Olympic Stadium. This is where the Nazi dictator staged the 1936 Olympics that were overshadowed by his racist ideology.

Laudrup wants to leave Milan

COPENHAGEN (R) — AC Milan striker Brian Laudrup said Monday he was fed up with the power and the policies of club owner Silvio Berlusconi and that he wanted to leave the Italian champions. "In other countries soccer club presidents are elected, but here they are kind of dictators. They step in and decide anything they like over the heads of the coaches and the players," Laudrup told Danish news agency Ritzau in Milan. The Danish international, who has openly criticised Milan's policy of having two class players competing for each position on the team, has lately been left out of the Milan squad. He said he was tired of "being a number that is sometimes drawn from a hat and is allowed to play."

Bentt leaves hospital with warning

LONDON (R) — American heavyweight Michael Bentt left hospital Monday with a warning never to box again after suffering a concussive brain injury during a world title fight. The London-born American collapsed in his dressing room after he was knocked out in the seventh round, losing his World Boxing Organisation title to Britain's Herbie Hide at the New London Stadium Saturday night. John Sutcliffe, consultant neurosurgeon at the Royal London Hospital where 28-year-old Bentt was treated, warned him not to fight again because of the cumulative damage to his brain from years of punches.

Brundle to start in Brazil for McLaren

WOKING, England (AP) — Having failed to coax Formula One defending champion Alain Prost out of retirement, the McLaren team announced Monday that Martin Brundle would be its second driver in Sunday's Brazilian Grand Prix. Brundle, who finished seventh in the drivers' championship last year with Ligier, won the place in the starting grid for the year's opening race over French driver Philippe Alliot. Alliot had also been signed for the 1994 season, and McLaren said it would name its second driver behind Finland's Mika Hakkinen on a race-by-race basis. Prost, who won the title last year with Williams, test drove the new McLaren Peugeot earlier this month. The Frenchman, who would have to be released from his Williams contract to drive this season, then announced he would not be available for 1994.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TARIK HUSSEIN
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FOLLOW THE RABBI'S RULE

East-West	vulnerable	West
NORTH	♠ A 10 4 2	♠ K
♣ Q 6 3	♣ K J 5	♣ K
♦ K Q 7	♦ K	♦ K
WEST	♠ 8 7 5	♠ K
♣ A K 5 2	♣ J 10 9 4	♣ K
♦ A 7 3	♦ 10 9 8 4 2	♦ K
♠ 6 5 4	♠ 10 9 8	♠ K
SOUTH	♠ Q J 9 6 5	♠ K
♣ 8 7	♣ K	♣ K
♦ Q 6	♦ K	♦ K
♠ A J 3 2	♠ K	♠ K

The bidding:
West North East South
Pass 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠
Pass 2 ♠ Pass 3 ♠
Pass 4 ♠ Pass Pass
Pass

Opening lead: King of ♣
In the good old days, there was a kibitzer at New York bridge clubs who would, after the first possible cue at great length on the obvious. This trait earned him the nickname of The Rabbi. One of his oft-cited remarks has become known as The Rabbi's Rule: When the king is singleton, play the ace!

West correctly did not open a flat

11 points in first seat. To facilitate a rebid, North selected one club for the opening bid, then raised partner's spade response. When South could make a game try, North accepted willingly.

West led the king of hearts, then cunningly shifted to a low diamond, won in the closed hand. With three sure losers in the red suits, the contract hinged on not losing a trump trick and the percentage play, by a considerable margin, was to take a finesse for the king. However, South decided on further investigation before committing to that line.

At trick three, declarer returned a diamond. West rose with the ace, cashed the ace of hearts and shifted, safely enough, to a club. But the cat was already out of the bag.

West, who had passed originally, had already shown up with the ace of diamonds. With the king of spades as well, West would have had 14 prime points in high cards alone and a sure opening bid. That placed East with the king of spades, so declarer won the club, utilized the defenders by leading the queen of spades, then rose with the ace to tell the king and land the game.

The Rabbi would have been proud!

Hawks beat Jazz in overtime

ATLANTA (R) — Stacey Augmon's dunk with 28.5 seconds left in overtime gave Atlanta the lead for good as the Hawks beat the Utah Jazz 100-96 Monday.

Kevin Willis had 25 points and 12 rebounds and Danny Manning and Mookie Blaylock each had 20 points for Atlanta, which has won three straight games and five of its last six to move a half game ahead of the Knicks for the best record in the Eastern Conference.

Jeff Hornacek had 25 points and John Stockton 21 to pace Utah, which went winless on a four-game road trip.

The Jazz took a 96-93 lead in overtime on a pair of Hornacek jumpers but Blaylock hit a 3-pointer with 1:30 left to knot the game at 96.

Hornacek had hit a foul shot with 15.9 seconds left in the fourth quarter to send the game into overtime. Hornacek was given a one-shot foul when

Craig Ehlo was called for a foul away from the ball.

In Houston, Hakeem Olajuwon had 13 points and six rebounds in the fourth quarter as the Rockets extended their winning streak to five games with a 128-112 triumph over the Washington Bullets.

Olajuwon finished with 35 points and 15 rebounds and Kenny Smith had 24 points for Houston, which with its victory over Washington has beaten every other team in the NBA at least once this season.

Houston moved a game ahead of San Antonio for top spot in the Midwest Division and clinched a playoff spot.

Don MacLean had 23 points and Mitchell Butler scored 18 for the Bullets, who have a six-game losing streak. At Los Angeles, Sedale Threatt had five points in a decisive 11-1 fourth-quarter run as the Lakers defeated the Miami Heat 84-81.

NBA standings after games played Monday (Tabulate under won, lost, winning percentage and games behind):

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	Gb
New York	45	19	.703	—
Orlando	39	26	.600	6½
Miami	37	28	.569	8½
New Jersey	33	31	.516	12
Boston	22	42	.344	23
Philadelphia	21	44	.323	24½
Washington	19	47	.288	27

Central Division

	W	L	Pct	Gb
Atlanta	46	19	.708	—
Chicago	43	22	.662	3
Cleveland	36	29	.554	10
Indiana	34	29	.540	11
Charlotte	28	35	.444	17
Milwaukee	18	46	.281	27½
Detroit	18	47	.277	28

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct	Gb
* Houston	46	17	.730	—
* San Antonio	46	19	.708	1
Utah	43	24	.642	5
Denver	32	32	.500	14½
Minnesota	18	47	.277	29
Dallas	8	57	.123	39

Pacific Division

	W	L	Pct	Gb
* Seattle	47	17	.734	—
Phoenix	42	22	.656	5
Portland	39	27	.591	9
Golden State	37	27	.578	10
LA Lakers	27	37	.422	20
LA Clippers	24	39	.381	22½
Sacramento	23	42	.354	24½

* Clinched playoff spot.

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Davenport defeats Majoli in Houston

HOUSTON, Texas (R) — American 17-year-old Lindsay Davenport got revenge against 16-year-old Croatian Iva Majoli Monday with a 6-2, 6-1, victory in the first round of the \$400,000 Virginia Slims of Houston tennis tournament.

Two years ago at this tournament, Majoli made her debut by defeating Davenport in the first round and eventually advanced to the quarterfinals.

This time, Davenport fell behind two-love but then reeled off ten consecutive games on her way to the win.

Davenport, who has climbed from number 50 at this time last year to her current rank of 11, said she has changed a lot.

"I'm a lot better. I'm getting more consistent. How I started this match was how I used to play whole matches," she said.

Davenport took only 56 minutes to defeat 39th-ranked Majoli. After struggling in the first two games, Davenport switched rackets to one with looser strings. The new racket gave the tall American added power that Majoli could not handle.

After reaching the semifinals at the Lipton Championships last week, Davenport could climb into the top ten with a good tournament this week.

She could do so by beating Kimberly Po in the second round in the semifinals.

Gritschuk, Platov take dance lead

CHIBA, Japan (R) — Olympic champions Oksana Gritschuk and Evgeny Platov took the world championship ice dancing lead Tuesday against opposition they conceded made their task easier.

The Russian couple captured Olympic gold in Norway last month from world champion compatriots Maya Usova and Alexander Zhulin, with the 1984 Olympic champions, Britons Jayne Torvill and Christopher Dean, third.

Both those couples have moved disenchanted away from competition, leaving the new team on top with what looks like a clear run at the world title.

"Of course this feels easier than the Olympics but we have strong rivals here, too," Platov said after he and Gritschuk won both compulsory dances to establish themselves firmly in first place.

But the dances, the Starlight Waltz and the Tango Romantica, are worth only 20 per cent of the marks, and the two couples behind them are hungry for success, even if realistically fighting only for second place.

Sophie Moniotte and Pascal Lavanchy of France grabbed that position in the early skirmishing from Finns Susanna Rahkamo and Petri Kokko.

They were fifth and fourth respectively in the Olympics.

The Finns were disappointed because effectively they dropped a place from where they might have expected to be with the other two couples dropping out.

"We need to keep fighting."

That was worth only 20 per cent of the marks. But that's skating. We couldn't have done better," Kokko said.

The three couples in podium positions have contrasting views on whether the world championships should even be held in Olympic years.

"We are not really sure if it is a good thing but it only happens every four years," Platov said.

Rahkamo said she and Kokko were happy to be here. "It's nice that we have a chance. When there are three big championships, it makes a long season but it is the same for everybody."

Lavanchy demurred. "It wouldn't be so concentrated if there was more time between the events, especially between the Olympics and the worlds."

"Two more weeks would have helped," he said.

The International Skating Union (ISU) refused Tuesday to discuss further the judging controversies arising from the Winter Olympics in Norway last month.

But they did agree that their relations with the press had been inadequate and pledged to improve them.

Four senior ISU officials held a meeting with journalists during the world championships Tuesday, the first of what they hoped would be a series "to educate the uneducated" as one of the officials put it.

The officials were ISU president Olaf Poulsen of Norway, Vice-President Lawrence Demmy of Britain, and the Chairman of the figure skating and

the ice dancing technical committees, Sally Stapleford of Britain and Hans Kutschera of Austria.

The main point arising from the meeting was the ISU's intention to appoint a media liaison officer to deal with press queries and explanations to the press.

This followed criticism of the lack of explanation of the judging at the Olympics, particularly in the women's and ice dancing competitions.

The ISU refused to consider allowing judges or referees to speak to the press about the judging after individual, sections of competitions.

"It is not possible during an event. Our regulations prevent judges discussing the event during a competition. It could influence the judging of the rest of the event," Demmy said.

But another member of the ice dance committee, Wolfgang Kunz of Germany, took issue privately with Demmy on the matter. Kunz said he felt there could be comment "not from the judges, but from the referee."

The ice dance has three events: The compulsory dances, the original dance and the free dances. The other competitions have two: The technical programme and the free skating.

Journalists were repulsed from asking questions about the judging of the women's competition in Norway, where Oksana Baiul beat Nancy Kerrigan for the gold and about the ice dance, where Britons Torvill and Dean finished third.

Grand jury concludes Harding was in on plot to injure rival

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — The three men who admitted they carried out the assault on Nancy Kerrigan were indicted Monday by a grand jury that also accused rival skater Tonya Harding of helping plan the attack.

But because of Harding's plea bargain with authorities last week, she was not charged in the indictment, said Norm Frink, Multnomah County deputy district attorney. In her guilty plea, she acknowledged helping cover up the attack afterward but did not admit planning it.

Shawn Eckardt, Shane Stant and Derrick Smith pleaded innocent Monday to charges of racketeering, conspiracy to commit assault, assault and unlawfully obtaining communications.

The indictment said the three, Harding and her ex-husband, Jeff Gillooly, agreed among themselves "to unlawfully, intentionally and knowingly cause physical injury to Nancy Kerrigan by means of a dangerous weapon."

Harding and Gillooly both have bypassed the grand jury process and reached plea bargains. Harding pleaded guilty last week to conspiracy to hinder prosecution. Gillooly pleaded guilty Feb. 1 to one count of racketeering.

Frink indicated the three men arraigned Monday also may be able to reach a plea agreement to avoid a trial.

"The defence and the state will be talking and we'll proceed from there," he said. Eckardt faced additional

charges of conspiracy to hinder prosecution and hindering prosecution. Smith also was charged with conspiracy to hinder prosecution.

The communications charge stems from at least one secretly taped meeting involving those who participated in the conspiracy.

Eckardt and Smith were arrested Jan. 13. Stant surrendered to authorities in Arizona the following day. All three initially were charged with conspiracy to commit assault and were free on bail pending the

indictment. Eckardt, 26, is Harding's 139.5-kilogramme would-be bodyguard and a friend of Gillooly's since childhood. He has admitted helping to plan the attack and contacting Smith to carry it out.

Stant, 22, is Smith's nephew and shares his uncle's interest in paramilitary activity. Stant went to Massachusetts to carry out the attack, but when that plan fell through he followed her to Detroit, where she was preparing for the U.S. figure skating championships.

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TODAY	INDECENT PROPOSAL Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Fifi Abdo/Hisham A. in QADARA Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD '1' DEMOLITION MAN Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD '2' ACCIDENTAL HERO Shows: 12:30, 3:45, 6:00, 8:15, 10:15	Opening Soon A political comedy Forbidden X Forbidden	Watch for the surprise — The next play...	Since the actors are abroad the theatre is closed It will re-open on April 6, 1994 for two weeks in the last performances of: "Arab Summit Conference"

NEWS IN BRIEF

Malaysian sultan arrives tomorrow

AMMAN (J.T.) — Sultan Azlan Muhebbuddin Shah of Malaysia and his wife start a three-day visit to Jordan on Thursday in response to an invitation extended to them by Their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor. Sultan Shah will exchange views with King Hussein on various international issues of common interest, and review bilateral relations. The Malaysian monarch and his wife will also visit historical, archaeological and cultural places, in addition to Islamic sites and places of tourist attraction.

Fire on Aqaba ship; no casualties

AMMAN (J.T.) — A fire broke out Tuesday on a passenger ship berthed at Aqaba port but caused no casualties, civil defence officials reported. They said the Al Noor, a 2,200-tonne ferry boat which plies between Aqaba and Egypt's Nuweibeh port, caught fire at 12 noon. The ship was berthed 300 metres from the coast and the fire did not cause any injuries, they said. The Al Noor is owned by the Arab Maritime Bridge Company. The extent of damage to the ship was not immediately known, but a civil defence spokesman said that the blaze was still on at around 4 p.m., four hours after it started indicating that damages could be extensive. Later Tuesday, Major Omar Tarawneh, head of the Aqaba Civil Defence Department, told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the fire had been brought under control. No further details were immediately available.

Sudanese government and rebels meet

NAIROBI (R) — Sudanese government officials and rebels began face-to-face talks in Nairobi on Tuesday in a new drive to try to end nearly 11 years of civil war in Africa's largest country. Two rebel delegations and a Sudanese government team met at the Kenyan Foreign Ministry with the foreign ministers of mediators Kenya, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda, officials said. Each delegation had six members and Kenya Foreign Minister Kalonzo Musyoka chaired the talks under the sponsorship of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD). An official reported some disagreements on Tuesday over how fully to open routes to allow U.N. and other agencies to take food to people displaced by the war and threatened with famine. "At least they have begun talking so right now we can say there is hope they will move forward," the official added.

Court restores immunity of Kurdish deputy

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's constitutional court has restored the parliamentary immunity of one Kurdish member of parliament (MP) but upheld the assembly's decision to strip six other Kurdish nationalist MPs of their immunity. "The parliament decision to lift the immunity of Democracy Party (DEP) Deputy Selim Sadak has been annulled unanimously," Guven Dincer, deputy chief judge of Turkey's highest judicial body, told Anatolian news agency on Monday night. "We have rejected objections to the parliament's decision to lift the immunities of the other deputies," he said. Mr. Sadak was stripped of his immunity March 2, detained briefly then released pending trial on charges of crimes against the state. Six other MPs, five from the DEP and one independent, are still in jail on charges involving links to separatist Kurdish guerrillas that can carry the death penalty. They were also stripped of their immunity on March 2 and detained. They were formally arrested while in jail on March 16.

Protests injure 20 police in France

PARIS (AP) — A sub-minimum wage law for younger employees took effect Tuesday despite more violent protests that injured at least 20 riot police overnight, one seriously. Students in Lyon, Nantes, Toulouse and a dozen other towns demonstrated Monday, resuming last week's protests against the conservative government's law to boost employment by paying young employees 80 per cent of minimum wage. A demonstration by up to 4,000 people persisted until just before midnight in Nantes, when riot police made a final charge to disperse demonstrators who lit bonfires in the city centre. Students, claiming they were provoked, hurled cobblestones and police fired tear-gas during the protests that began in the afternoon. One officer was hospitalised after a cobblestone flung by a demonstrator broke his jaw. Seventeen people were arrested. In Lyon, about 6,000 people took to the streets.

Khamenei: Iran will not bow to U.S.

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said the Islamic republic will never bow to any pressure from the United States, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported on Tuesday. "He said that the United States, in order to establish ties with Iran, is exerting pressure on Iran to give up its rational positions, adding that one such position was the fact that Iran opposed the intervention of domineering powers in the internal affairs of the Iranian nation," IRNA said. It said Ayatollah Khamenei was addressing a crowd at a Muslim shrine. "The United States should know that the great nation of Iran has an ancient culture and has an illustrious past. This nation has seen enough hardship in its history to have developed a steel-like resolve," he quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as saying. "This nation shall never accept the United States and other domineering powers as her masters."

Swedish soldiers depart from Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP) — Sweden on Tuesday began pulling out a 492-strong logistics contingent that had served with a U.N. peacekeeping force on South Lebanon's volatile border with Israel since 1978. Timor Goksel, spokesman for the 5,800-strong U.N. peacekeeping force, said the first batch of 100 Swedish troops was flown to Beirut airport for a scheduled 11 a.m. (0900GMT) flight home. The Swedes are due to complete their withdrawal in two more batches by April 1 and will be replaced by a similarly sized contingent from Poland, Mr. Goksel said. Sweden said after its contribution to a U.N. peacekeeping force in Bosnia-Herzegovina last year that it would withdraw the Lebanon contingent because it could not afford two such missions abroad. The Swedish contingent suffered a total of seven fatalities during its service with the U.N. force. The U.N. contingent was deployed by the Security Council in South Lebanon after a 91-day Israeli invasion in 1978. The force, known as UNIFIL, is made up of troops from France, Ireland, Ghana, Finland, Norway, Nepal, Fiji, Poland and Italy.

Israel-PLO said near deal

(Continued from page 1)

mining the massacre and calling for an international presence in the territories.

Mr. Arafat, who has demanded an armed international force to protect the two million Palestinians in the territories, said he would not return to the talks until he had concrete security guarantees.

Mr. Arafat discussed a preliminary accord with the PLO leadership Monday night and they gave him a green light to conclude the agreement with Israel, the sources said. They added that prior to the meeting, Mr. Arafat met in

private for an hour with Gen. Shabak.

The deal was worked out by Norwegian envoy Terje Roed Larsen, a key figure in the diplomatic efforts to end the deadlock. He was also instrumental in arranging the Sept. 13 accord.

The agreement now must be approved by the PLO's

the Israeli team — foreign ministry director Uri Savir, Rabin adviser Jacques Neria and Gen. Uzi Dayan of the defence ministry — left Tunis Tuesday.



REGENT VISITS MINISTRY: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Regent, Tuesday visited the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and was briefed by Minister of Tourism Mohammad Adwan about the ministry's programmes. Dr. Adwan also outlined the ministry's plans in regions where archaeological sites are located

and schemes to boost tourism revenues. Dr. Adwan also outlined the ministry's cooperation with the private sector. Prince Mohammad voiced his appreciation of the ministry's work and its promoting of services at tourist sites (Petra photo)

Survivors say Hebron mosque firing came from two sources

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Palestinian survivors suggested Tuesday that at least two gunmen were involved in the Hebron mosque massacre, contradicting Israeli claims that a lone Jewish settler was responsible for killing dozens of Muslim worshippers.

But none of the three witnesses who said they heard shots fired from different directions saw a second gunman.

Members of the Israeli's five-man commission of inquiry pressed the witnesses on why they did not mention a second shooter in earlier statements to investigators and whether they might have heard ricochets or echoes.

Eliezer Goldberg, a supreme court justice, asked whether the testimony by some of the 11 Palestinian witnesses appearing Tuesday had been orchestrated.

"Is it possible that beforehand you were guided to say something about this?" Mr. Goldberg asked after five witnesses requested at the end of their testimony to talk about Jewish settler harassment of Muslim worshippers at the

Ibrahimi Mosque, the site of the massacre.

Witness Mohammad Musbah Al Jabari, 29, bristled when confronted by Mr. Goldberg with his earlier affidavit to the Israeli human rights group B'tselem in which there was no mention of a second gunman.

"You want the truth?" Mr. Jabari said, his voice raised. "The truth is that there was more than one source of firing."

Mr. Jabari, an English teacher, said after the hearing that he did not believe the commission, which was appointed by the supreme court at the Israeli government's urging, would be fair.

"The court itself follows the same policy as the Israeli government. I came here to tell the truth to the world through the mass media," he told the Associated Press.

Witness Abdul Hafez Al Jabari, 70, told the televised hearing that the friction between the Palestinians in Hebron and the Jewish settlers there had become unbearable. "Either you have to take us to Arab countries or you have

to remove the people who are bothering us," Mr. Jabari said. Some 450 settlers live in six enclaves in the heart of Hebron, a town of 110,000 Palestinians.

The Maariv daily reported Tuesday that the government was considering banning private settler cars in Hebron and that the army would transport settlers instead in armoured vehicles. The daily also said paratroop units were being transferred from duty in Lebanon to Hebron to protect settlers because of fears of Palestinian retaliation for the massacre.

The Palestinian witnesses were issued summonses by the army to appear before the commission, and the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) reportedly gave its approval. Earlier this month, Muslim officials responsible for the mosque refused to appear.

The army has said there was only one gunman and that all 110 bullets fired in the Muslim prayer area in the mosque came from the Galil automatic rifle belonging to Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein.

Uganda denies link with Israeli arms

KAMPALA (Agencies) — Uganda said on Tuesday it knew nothing about a mysterious planeload of Israeli weapons which Israel and Cyprus insisted were destined for the East African country.

"We have no knowledge of the arms," Hope Kiwengere, press secretary of Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni, told Reuters.

"We have no knowledge of the arms whatsoever. They must have been destined for elsewhere," added Roland Katunguka, spokesman for the ruling National Resistance Army (NRA) led by Mr. Museveni.

A Nigerian Boeing 707 carrying the weapons returned to Tel Aviv on Sunday, five days after it left Israel and became stranded in Cyprus when its pilot said he had to land to refuel and then announced he had engine trouble and could not leave.

Israeli army radio said the

weapons-laden aircraft had returned to Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion airport for engine repairs.

It said a second plane which also landed at Tel Aviv on Sunday from Larnaca airport in Cyprus was supposed to take the cargo of arms to Uganda — apparently early on Monday.

The weapons returned to Israel a day after the Ugandan government-run New Vision newspaper quoted foreign and defence ministry officials as denying knowledge of the Israeli arms shipment.

"It's a deal between Israel military industries and Uganda," Oded Ben Ami, spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, had said. "It has all the permits... it's kosher."

In Cyprus, where diplomats were suspicious the arms were bound for another destination in Africa, Civil Aviation Director Michael Herodotu insisted

to reporters: "The arms are going to Uganda. The foreign ministry has checked. The deal is clean."

Cypriot authorities declined to give any details of the consignment. An official said on Friday a plane from Britain was due to arrive on the island from Britain that night to pick up the weapons.

It failed to arrive before the stranded plane flew back to Israel.

A Sudanese government official said in Nairobi last week he suspected the arms were destined for rebels in southern Sudan.

Uganda borders southern Sudan. Supplies for the rebels from the south, fighting rule from the north, have in the past passed through its territory.

Egypt had refused to let the Nigerian Boeing land on a flight from Tel Aviv to Entebbe and it flew to Cyprus.

Somalis fail again to agree on truce

NAIROBI (Agencies) — For the fourth time in three days, Somalia's faction leaders Tuesday postponed announcing plans to stop fighting and set up a new government in the lawless, war-torn country.

Somalia's principal warlords, Ali Mahdi Mohammad and General Mohammad Farah Aided, and the leaders of 13 other factions were expected to declare a cease-fire and say who will rule the Horn of Africa country.

But U.N. officials said an hour before the planned announcement that the group was still locked in disagreement and that there would be a 24-hour delay. They already had postponed the announcement twice Sunday and once Monday.

The faction leaders have been meeting in Nairobi for more than a week with funding from the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia.

U.N. spokesman George Bennett said Monday that if the Somalis failed to reach agreement as promised Tuesday, "I don't think the U.N. is going to fund their stay for any longer in Nairobi." "When the announcement was postponed from Tuesday to Wednesday, he said there were no major points still under negotiation."

"Last night there were three things remaining," Mr. Bennett said. "I don't think it should be very difficult for them to be able to agree on them."

U.N. officials have declined to reveal details of the talks.

Gen. Aided and Mr. Ali Mahdi are the main figures trying to take control of Soma-

lia. The United Nations also brokered a ceasefire in March 1992 after fighting between the two forces had destroyed three-quarters of the capital, Mogadishu, and killed up to 30,000 people.

The international community has feared that the country will revert to chaos after most Western forces withdraw from Somalia in the coming days. Gen. Aided and Mr. Ali Mahdi previously have announced separate plans to set up a transitional government after foreign troops leave.

The United Nations last May took over the peacekeeping mission. It began December 1992 when U.S.-led multinational force arrived to stop the looting of relief food meant for hundreds of thousands of Somalis left to starve by the war and a drought.

But the humanitarian mission turned into a small war last June when Somali militia began killing peacekeepers they said were interfering in their country.

After 18 American soldiers died and 83 were wounded in an Oct. 3-4 battle with militia in Mogadishu, U.S. President Bill Clinton ordered the American withdrawal. Thirteen other nations followed.

Italian troops are leaving Mogadishu by ship this week, and the Americans will complete their withdrawal on Friday. Germany, France, Belgium and a number of other nations have already pulled out.

More U.S. troops flew out of Mogadishu on Tuesday while others loaded ships and prepared to sail for home.

Trade centre defendants reported on hunger strike

NEW YORK (R) — The four men convicted 17 days ago in the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing are on a hunger strike to protest conditions at a high-security federal prison in Pennsylvania, the wife of one of the men said Monday.

The wife of Mahmoud Abu Halima, one of the four found guilty in the case, said she heard from her husband for the first time Monday since his conviction March 4. "Mahmoud called today and said he and the others are on a hunger strike. He said they were protesting the barbaric conditions at the penitentiary," Mariane Abu Halima said in a telephone interview.

Attorney William Kunstler, who is representing defendants in a related bomb plot case expected to go to trial this September, confirmed that the men were refusing food.

He said he was told in a telephone call that the four have been on hunger strikes ranging from seven to 11 days.

Mr. Kunstler, detailing the men's complaints, said, "They have not been allowed a phone call. No one has been allowed to visit them. They're all on hunger strike."

"They are trying to break them so that they will testify in the bigger case."

He said that he spoke on the telephone earlier in the day with Mr. Abu Halima and co-

defendant Mohammad Salameh.

He said the men had not been allowed to make any phone calls until Monday.

The other two in prison are Nidal Ayyad and Ahmad Ajaj. The four defendants were taken to the high-security prison in Lewisburg in central Pennsylvania on the evening of their conviction 17 days ago.

U.S. Bureau of Prison spokesman Greg Bogdan could not confirm whether the men were on a hunger strike.

"An inmate's behaviour while in our custody is not public information," he said.

They were found guilty in U.S. district court in New York city on all counts, including the most serious charge of conspiracy, in the Feb. 26, 1993, bombing of the landmark trade centre complex in Lower Manhattan.

They are due to be taken back to Manhattan on May 4 for sentencing, each man faces up to life in prison without parole.

Mr. Kunstler said the men are considering replacing their lawyers after the guilty verdicts.

He said he recommended that they appear without lawyers at the sentencing, arguing that they had received "ineffective" representation by their attorneys.

COLUMN

Thatcher's minor faint causes big stir in Britain

LONDON (R) — Former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's brief collapse during a trip to Chile prompted feverish speculation in Britain Tuesday that the indefatigable iron lady might be showing signs of mental fatigue. Lady Thatcher's swoon during a speech to businessmen Monday dominated newspaper front pages back home in Britain, despite assurances from her aides that the indisposition was only a minor reaction to a stomach bug. Tabloid newspapers splashed "the drama of Thatcher's collapse" and pondered whether time had finally caught up with the workaholic ex-premier. Breakfast Television News carried extensive footage of 68-year-old Lady Thatcher being carried off the Santiago stage after slumping over the microphone. "Is the iron lady finally getting metal fatigue?" asked the Sun newspaper in a column about how Lady Thatcher survived on only a few hours sleep while in office and used special baths and mud packs to retain a youthful appearance. Friends and colleagues fuelled the debate over Lady Thatcher's health by recalling her legendary energy and saying she steadfastly refused to slow down despite her departure from office more than three years ago. Mass-selling novelist Jeffrey Archer, a close ally and Conservative Party activist, said Lady Thatcher insisted on behaving like a woman of 40 while her daughter Carol was quoted as saying she obstinately refused to lighten her workload. "Let's face it she is not young and she has had what might be described as a busy working life," journalist Carol Thatcher told the Daily Express newspaper. "I would like to take my mother to one side and advise her to cut down her workload but I know she would take absolutely zero notice."

Lady Thatcher's former press spokesman Sir Bernard Ingham tried to calm the speculation, saying his old boss was fighting-fit the last time he saw her. "I bet she is soon up and at 'em again. I saw her a few weeks ago and she was firing on all cylinders," he told the British Broadcasting Corporation.

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Pope cannot be sued in Texas, judge rules

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (R) — A Texas state judge has ruled Pope John Paul II cannot be named as a defendant in a lawsuit seeking damages for alleged child abuse by a Catholic priest. San Antonio District Judge Michael Petty heard arguments last week by Attorney Michael Peden who claimed the Pope was head of a business operating in Texas, and therefore, could be named in the civil suit. Judge Peden agreed with attorney Michael Bucholz of the U.S. Department of State that Pope John Paul II is covered under diplomatic immunity afforded to heads of state. Judge Peden rejected Judge Petty's argument that a 1976 U.S. Supreme Court ruling allowed the Pope to be named as the head of a business operating in Texas. The civil lawsuit against the suburban Catholic priest, now will go forward without the Pope as a defendant.

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Firm to test delivery of movies via phone lines

LAS VEGAS (R) — Pacific Bell said it will start sending films to movie theatres via fiber optic telephone networks, eliminating the costly physical distribution of movie prints. Pacific, a unit of Pacific Telesis Group, said at the annual meeting of the National Broadcasting Association that the new technology, dubbed "cinema of the future," will revolutionise the movie industry. Alcatel network systems will provide video transmission and switching equipment for the test. Pacific Bell said it will transmit movies in a "theatre-quality, high-definition format" from Hollywood movie studios directly to theatres through fiber optic telecommunication networks. "The current method of copying and shipping movies to theatres is outdated," Michael Fitzpatrick, executive vice president of Pacific Bell, said. "This new digital distribution system will revolutionise the movie industry."

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